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EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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A PILGRIM OF 1932
RECAPTIONED FROM A WOODCUT BY THOMAS DERRICK

Change

WHAT would those great apostles of progress through change, the Victorians, have said of 1931! Not only economic distress and political turmoil distinguished the dead and unregretted old year, but such change as they scarcely contemplated. Perhaps every man or woman above the stage of conscious civilization has somehow between January and December sharply changed those estimates of value which—mental barometers—we carry with us always. The change, indeed, may have been sharper than the barometer recorded, and much more fundamental than such superficial reversals as between spending and saving, or from restless optimism to sullen caution. For the first time in our period, the *rentier* class has lost confidence in the economic system upon which they live. All but romanticists, fanatics, and politicians have given up Prohibition as a possible means of enforcing sobriety, and with it, and far more important, all confidence in righteousness by legislation, which was the last of the Puritan legacies. The intellectuals have changed most of all. They had seen the romantic idealism of the nineteenth century rise to a peak in the early twentieth, and then dissipate, like flying scud in the war, and post-war, years. They had grasped confidently a new realism, which attacked with ribald enthusiasm the tag ends of faith and loyalties which had frayed into prejudice and obscurantism. But in 1931, they looked, somewhat appalled, at an intellectual anarchy, in which hundreds of realists—political, social, economic—knew what ought to be done, and thousands and millions of the masses had not the slightest inclination to do it. The immense apparatus constructed by science for the abolition of poverty and war stands like a modern factory, improved to the last bolt, able to flood the world with goods —which no multitudes want and which therefore cannot be manufactured. Realism as a method of facing the facts, realism as a means of getting rid of bunk, sham, stuffed shirtism, ignorance, and stale prejudice was a gospel which worked even if it did not warm, but realism as a motive principle, realism as a reconstructive force, seems as bankrupt as the engineer's plans for ending the de-

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New Year's Eve Revery

By H. THEODRIC WESTBROOK

WHAT if this whirling earth should stop tonight,
With one sufficient shudder, sigh and cease
And make an end of its fantastic forms!
An end of you and me and restless love
While we are drinking wine in requiem
For what has been but shall not be again;
A sudden death to every aging hope,
A swift release for joy that fears review,
An end to all the watching and the slow
Waiting to see new seasons in the heart,
And peace to that embittered trinity,
The mind and soul and body of a man.
At the dark tremor of the earth's resolve,
While women hide their babes or cling to men
Who in bravado swear there's naught to fear
Though darkness deepen round the dying stars
And heaven be strewn with splinters of the sun;
As others, prostrate, call to gods, or shamed
Repeal their supplication with a groan,
Remembering how in joy no praise was sung,
And children, staring, shout their merriment,
Suspecting consternation of delight,
We'll all together while this hour sounds
Feel the texture of eternity.

Public Opinion

By HENRY KITTREDGE NORTON

MORE than two thousand years ago Aristotle gathered up his little brief experience and, in his own masterful fashion, set forth his conception of public opinion as the considered decisions of the citizens of any community arrived at in accordance with the practices of logical thought. Mankind has spent the intervening millenniums in a gruelling struggle to attain a democratic form of government in which public opinion as conceived by Aristotle should be the guiding light. Seven score and two years ago, that portion of mankind which happened to be in control of this section of the American continent thought they had reached the goal. They enshrined the Aristotelian concept in the Constitution of the United States. There it has been preserved as sacrosanct down to our own day. In the minds of the orthodox, an omniscient and infinitely wise public opinion is still looked upon as the universal solvent for all the ills, political, social, and economic, by which we are afflicted and as the unerring guide to universal well-being.

There have been skeptics along the way. Sir Robert Peel spoke of "that great compound of folly, weakness, prejudice, wrong feeling, right feeling, obstinacy, and newspaper paragraphs which is called public opinion." Graham Wallas, in his "Human Nature in Politics," pointed out the discrepancy between the abstract aims of self-government and the practical results. These practical observers found a worthy successor in Frank Kent, who, some four years ago, published "Political Behavior," a devastating analysis of the practical operation of democratic politics which tore to shreds the traditional theory of the role of public opinion as a logical guide to the body politic.

These assaults were serious enough in all conscience. But now come the psychologists. With their long and trusty scythes of neurosis and emotion they have laid low acres of the long-cultivated credos regarding sex and personality, the family and religion. Relentlessly they move on into the field of politics and sweep their blades across the very roots of our traditional conceptions of public opinion. Naught is too sacred and naught too staunch to stay their all-destroying zeal.

And there is no doubt that the studies of Laswell, Lund, Odegard, and even Rinaldo compel a reorientation of our attitude toward democracy as the foundation of government. The emotional impulses which direct the life of man in other relations are operative in his social and political life as well. Reason plays its part, but more often as the servant than as the guide of emotion. The public mind—if it exists—is as responsive to emotional compulsions as is the individual mind, perhaps more so. In Professor Odegard's opinion, "the amount of reason in political behavior is almost microscopic."

The difficulty appears to be that the Church Fathers were not successful in their efforts to segregate man from the animals by endowing him with an all-controlling reason. Despite their affirmations, man remains today essentially a creature of his emotions. Man's brain has evolved beyond that of all other animals, but his nervous system remains essentially the same as theirs. Under the stress of strong passion, such as fear, anger, or desire, his actions are strikingly like those of an animal under like circumstances. His love is blind; his hate is blind; his prejudice is blind. His reason and his intellect, in so far as they come into play at all, do so merely as the servitors of the dominant passion.

In our search for emotional satisfaction we continually subordinate our reason to our desires. We select the facts in any given situation which bear out our preconceived notions. We accept as true that which we want to have true. We believe what we want to believe. As children we cling to our belief in Santa Claus as long as we possibly can because this belief satisfies an emotional craving. And as men we do the same with many other things on which conclusive proof is lacking. We even legislate to preserve our traditional conceptions of God, immortality, and divine creation from the disintegrating effects of scientific investigation.

On matters in regard to which evidence is more available, we have the same tendency to cling to our early beliefs. Race, religion, country, democracy, culture, are some of the subjects about which we have built up convictions on the slightest of rational foundations. Our beliefs on such matters appear to us so obvious, so self-evident, that we vigorously resist any attempt to contradict them, even though we have uncritically accepted them from others and made not the slightest examination of their rational basis. How many of us have rationally examined the grounds upon which we are Christians rather than Buddhists, Americans rather than Britons, Republicans rather than Democrats, Protestants rather than Cath-

This Week

"THE ROEBLINGS."
Reviewed by IRVING FINEMAN.

"TWELVE SECRETS OF THE CAUCASUS."
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"THE BIG BONANZA."
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"WHY BIRDS SING."
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"THE BEST SHORT STORIES OF 1931."
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THE COLLECTED POEMS OF RICHARD BURTON."
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IN DEFENSE OF TOMORROW."
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"CHARLES OF EUROPE."
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"WHAT DARE I THINK?"
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"THE HARBOURMASTER."
Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS.

NATION WIDE.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

Next Week, or Later

"BLAINE OF MAINE."
Reviewed by WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE.

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olics, or even "wets" rather than "drys"—or vice versa? How many of us after such an examination have changed from one to the other?

There have been conversions in all of these relations. There are Cardinal Newmans and Lord Astors. But the percentage of such cases is minute. Even among those who have set out to examine the grounds of their beliefs, by far the greater number have succeeded, not in finding rational grounds for a rational belief, but in rationalizing grounds to support the beliefs they already held. Under the illusion of seeking beliefs which would be justified by the facts, they have sought facts which would justify the beliefs they already had.

Thus far the arguments of the psychologists receive fairly general acceptance. But they have no thought of stopping here. They would press home their advantage until the traditional conception of rationality in public opinion receives the final *coup de grace*. Professor Lund, for example, has worked out a Law of Primacy in Persuasion. He submitted briefs for the positive and negative sides of a proposition to two groups. But one group read the supporting brief first, the other the opposing brief. After reading these, each group registered its opinion, one for and one against the proposition, in accord with the brief it had read. After reading the other brief, each group modified the intensity of its belief but retained its original position for or against the proposition.

Practical politicians were aware of this law long before Professor Lund was born. Gilbert and Sullivan knew that

> Every little boy or gal
> That's born into this world alive,
> Is either a little Liberal
> Or a little Conservative

To foster and preserve and transfer to each new generation the emotional patterns which insure party regularity, the party organizations pursue the same methods that the nations use in the emotional training of their citizens. The vast majority of us are Republicans for no better reason than that we were raised in a Republican family or Democrats simply because our forebears were Democrats. Professor Merriam has ascertained that from sixty-five to eighty-five per cent of our voters cast their ballots for the political party of their parents. In the case of the immigrant, he as readily takes on the party allegiance which is paramount in the neighborhood in which he settles.

Where transfers of allegiance do take place, personal interest—the desire for gain—is in most cases the determining element. This is a perfectly legitimate application of the theory of democracy when it is made in pursuance of a rational estimate of the interest involved. But we are not to be allowed even this vestige of the older theory. Robert Marshall submits evidence that even the appraisal of personal interest is often purely emotional. In two of the great agricultural regions of the country he compared the amount of rainfall in each four-year period of the last century with the results in the succeeding presidential elections. When the rainfall was above normal, the party in power obtained a majority in every election except one. When the rainfall was below normal, the opposing party obtained a majority in all save two cases. Thus in twenty-two elections out of twenty-five the expressed verdict of the sovereign voters on the political issues of the day coincided with their opinion of the weather!

Now it is fairly certain that each one of those several million sovereign voters would have cited what seemed to him rational grounds for his vote. Obvious "reasons" in plenty would have been forthcoming to explain each exercise of the suffrage. But the net result was to support the party in power when the crops were good and to punish it when they were bad.

This self-deceptive process is aided and abetted by the efforts of individuals to attain and hold leadership. Whenever a new issue of promising character appears, politicians, reformers, and Messiahs of all kinds spring to the fore. Except for the perennials who attain the title of "politician," we know not whence they come nor why. They appear over the public horizon with an astonishing array of facts more or less pertinent to the matter in hand. And they come with a still more astonishing assurance of conviction as to just what should be done about it.

Probably the old and seemingly inescapable desire for security has something to do with our acceptance of such leadership. We accept as an authority the man who can give us the comforting assurance that he speaks with authority. And if what he says happens to fit in with what we desire to have him say, then we are his. For he has doubly satisfied us. He has given us both the security of authority and the flattering unction that authority sees as we see.

The psychologists have been lying in wait for this type of leader. They have analyzed—one might say decomposed—the reformer quite to their liking. A somewhat Freudian theory of his existence may be briefly summarized. Reformism is due to the psychological condition of the reformer and not primarily to any social condition: the reformer is an hysteric and his reformism has the same genesis as libertinism in other subjects: his hysteria results from an inhibition of normal sexual life and is a form of sexual perversion, a sadistic gratification of sexual desire.

This may sound a bit extreme, but that is merely because we have not kept up with the progress of the psychologists. One after another of the leaders whose psychological processes have been brought under their doctrinal scalpels has been relieved of all semblance of wisdom and greatness. The general run of political agitators are hereafter to be classed as neurotics who should be receiving clinical treatment instead of the confidence of the people.

This may do for the "inspired leader of a cause" but his kind furnish only the highlights of our emotional political leadership. The majority of politicians who appeal to the people for their votes possess a much less complex emotional structure. They are more or less frankly motivated by self interest. They wear the outer garment of desire to serve the public, of course. But that fits closely over the inner garment of realization that they cannot serve the public in the desired way unless they are elected to office.

The main problem of the politician is to adjust his ostensible purposes to the emotional desires of the majority of the voters in his constituency. The basic emotions may be touched off by any number of stimuli. It is the politician's task to find the stimulus that will touch off the greatest number of people. Obviously a carefully reasoned analysis of the transportation problem or the tax-rate will not reach any great number. So the political leader simply ignores analysis and resorts to sonorous phrases about "soulless corporations," "common peepul," "justice," "humanity," and, above all, "Americanism."

This kind of activity is obviously not leadership at all. And yet it passes for such. It is not even misleadership. It is merely a tried and proved method of winning election to public office at the hands of a citizenship which is motivated by irrational emotion rather than rational judgment. Yet such "leaders" serve to formulate and vitalize the prejudices and emotional reactions of the electorate. What might otherwise be merely an inert resistance to the dissemination of rational judgments, becomes through their efforts, an active opposition. The whole process, according to the prophets of the new psychology, constitutes emotion's defense of its own validity against the claims of rational thought.

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Are we then to despair of democracy? The psychologists have placed a heavy burden of proof upon its advocates. Man in the mass appears to be an emotional being who only most reluctantly accepts guidance from the light of reason.

Before we surrender our cherished ideals, however, there is one consideration which warns us against accepting this psychological analysis at its full value. A glance backward down the road of history, along which man has made his weary way, freed himself from the limitations and superstitions of the savage, and created one civilization after another, raises a strong presumption that he has been guided by something more than an endless series of uninhibited emotional responses to immediate situations. Emotions may be powerful things but they alone do not explain how we got where we are. Is it still possible that reason had something to do with achieving such results as there are?

We are not here concerned with the process before the days of democracy. What matters is whether a rational public opinion can function under conditions of self-government. Despite the psychologists, there is evidence that it does. The history of our own country demonstrates an expanding capacity to deal with increasingly complex public problems. Public emotion may be just as rampant as its prophets claim, but there is a rational factor at work somewhere. Else we should long since have gone much more effectively to pot than we have.

Public opinion or public emotion, or some compound of the two, comes into play in at least three different political processes: elections, legislative acts, and administrative decisions. It may be conceded at once that an election is an occasion for an emotional outburst in which "the amount of reason is microscopic." Fortunately the emotional forces which are mobilized at election times are divided against each other. This division may be so nearly even that rational opinion might swing the decision. But we can hardly depend upon that being the case. If the advocates of rational judgments in politics were forced to rest their case upon elections, I fear they would be defeated before they began.

But our history has shown that in the great majority of cases the results of elections are not as vitally important in the national life as democratic theory would imply. Whichever party is returned to power, whichever candidate enjoys the honors and perquisites of office, the life and business of the country are carried on about as they would be otherwise. Between elections politics becomes a matter of legislation and administration. And rational public opinion, if it operates at all, must operate most actively in these spheres.

Newly elected legislators have, it may be almost conclusively presumed, conducted their campaigns on an emotional basis. Otherwise the opposing candidates would now be in their places. These new legislators were elected, let us admit, by the preponderant emotion of their constituencies.

In office, they are still under some necessity to cater to popular sentiment. But in the committee room, when they settle down to make their report, the atmosphere becomes fairly rational. Legislators, be they city councilmen or United States Senators, have no more occasion for emotional treatment of each other in private than have circus clowns for their antics after the audience has departed. They are fully aware that popularity is precarious and that their opponents at the next election will be lying in wait to turn the public emotion against them if they are given the slightest opportunity. Any course which promptly demonstrates its own absurdity will react on the men who adopted it. Avoiding such a course demands intelligence and study. The legislators must estimate as closely as possible in what direction and to what extent public sentiment will shift by the next election. Then they must plot a course for themselves which will offer the best working compromise between that sentiment and the realities of the particular situation—a highly rational proceeding.

It is because of this complete change of attitude with the passing of election day that party platforms are so frequently forgotten after they have served their campaign purposes. In case the interests and sentiments of his constituency are overwhelmingly in favor of a particular measure, the legislator will of course vote for it. But as ninety-nine out of a hundred bills are passed without attracting any general attention, the scope of rational action is much wider than the nature of the election campaign would give us warrant to hope.

Legislation therefore represents a compromise between the emotional demands of the populace and the rational judgments of the thinking minority. The latter thus play an important role in the democratic legislative process. It is conceded that a popular emotional outburst can upset them at any moment and on any issue. But popular emotional outbursts can only be provoked on such a small percentage of legislative problems that the net effect is to allow a wide opportunity for intelligent action.

In administrative decisions rational public opinion is still more powerful. Except for its elected chief, the executive branch of government is much less amenable to public emotion than the legislative branch. The executive officers of departments and the bureau chiefs are appointive officers in most cases. The heat and hokum of political campaigns play little or no part in their lives. With the mass of the public these officers rarely come in contact. Their minds are as much on their jobs as those of the average business or professional man and they are as anxious as he to conduct their affairs so as to win the approval of those whose opinions they respect.

There are, of course, occasional matters to be decided even by competent men which are "loaded with dynamite." In other words they have in some way or other drawn popular attention and public emotions are running high. These emotions may call for action quite different from that which rational judgment would dictate. In such cases the chief executive must make the best compromise possible between the demands of public emotion and the rational judgment of himself and his advisors.

These issues are, of course, the ones which are widely discussed in the press and are the subject of intense popular interest. As there is usually at least one such issue before the public, and one after another is debated and decided in the heated atmosphere of public emotion, the illusion is created that all public affairs are decided on an entirely irrational basis.

But the great bulk of the public business consists of matters which never cross the threshold of the public mind. It is a difficult task to focus public attention upon any issue and work up a public sentiment in regard to it. It is simply impossible to do it with more than a minute percentage of the issues which are disposed of in the ordinary course of the public business. In handling these, therefore, the administrative officers of the government—and, to a less extent, even the legislative officers—are almost entirely free from the influence of popular emotion. In regard to such issues they seek the counsel and approval of the intelligent minority which applies rational judgment to public affairs.

The operation of this public opinion is of course far from certain. For even the thoughtful section of the community is still human. Its emotions, while apparently under control most of the time, have a latent power which is sometimes irresistible. Even when the emotions do not assert themselves, this minority suffers under the limitations of its knowledge. It is not omniscient. It is not all-wise. It must frequently feel its own way. And while doing so, it is far from unanimous. But it does tend to bring the rational judgment of the body politic into ultimate control of democratic political life.

All the psychologists have done, despite their sweeping and devastating condemnations, is to prove that democracy is a human institution with the ineptitudes and shortcomings that characterize all human undertakings. Emotion plays its part, sometimes useful, sometimes destructive. But emotion is evanescent and reason has staying qualities which enable it to win through. The Aristotelian conception of public opinion as a cold logical process is unrealized, but the emotionalists have by no means destroyed

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the essential control of reason in democracy. And, amid the worries caused by the increasing complexity of our lives, we may find some compensation in the thought that this very complexity enlarges the sphere of reason in public affairs while it can do little to enlarge the sphere of emotion.

Change

(*Continued from page* 421)

pression by spending government money. That is one of the profound, and not yet fully realized, changes of 1931.

In this hurly burly pure literature has very definitely withdrawn to the side lines. Poetry is there, with its back to the game, and fiction has shown more and more tendencies (especially British fiction) toward marking time with the idyllic and the historical. Great books are not written to make epochs. They come from epochs. A time of energetic reconstruction favors literature, and so, though more narrowly, does a time of iconoclasm. But confused and watchful waiting indicates distress, muddle, and futility, from none of which literature easily comes. The really important books of 1931 have been little read. They have been the books of the realists, though not of the realists in literature. They have been written by psychologists analyzing human nature, by economists surveying world conditions, by political philosophers describing inevitabilities to which the public are blind, by historians and biographers interpreting the present in terms of the past. They have been little read even by the readers who can be reached by books because these readers have been inattentive to sound and realistic writing. They were not inattentive in 1914, and the years following, when the war brought a sharp urgency into history, and they fed eagerly then on much that by no stretch of the term could be called propaganda. If they are inattentive now it is because they are lethargic. They expect nothing of confusion but more confusion. They think that the remedies of the realists are just more of the same medicine that made the world sick of the War to End Wars and Prosperity.

This skepticism of cures of demonstrable value in such a crisis as this one, is deplorable. Something is weary in the imagination of civilized men which must be invigorated. When that moment comes, and it may be near at hand, literature will be one of the prime agencies for continuance. But we are not naïve enough to suppose that all the world needs at the moment is some great books. They come when we are ready for them.

And yet it is not irrelevant to point to a truth just now much forgotten, that the records of imaginative literature are among the few manifestations of the human spirit which in a changing age do not change, or change very slowly. The great scenes in the great plays and novels, the great passages in essay and poetry, are valid today because they represent a *continuum* of life in which past and present exist together. History is analysis, architecture is anonymous, but there is an assurance of vital continuity in "Tom Jones" or Virgil or a Chinese novel or Chaucer or Jane Austen which has more medicine for a time like this than prospectuses of Utopia or premature philosophies. The distrust of literature *per se* which has been growing among realists is due to a sound feeling that the world as we know it must be reorganized on principles laid down already by scientific investigation, of which many are certainly not to be found in literature, although more than the sociologists and the psychologists are willing to admit. But the world at present is not getting reorganized, and one reason is a lack of confidence in itself. We have changed too much, the people seem to say, and it does no good. Why change more? And if we suggest that more reading of Shakespeare, Goethe, Plato, Racine, Voltaire, Dickens, Whitman might be a tonic for such valetudinarianism, we are arguing for no panacea, but only that here (even in Voltaire) is one stimulus to the hopeful life.

An Engineering Family

THE ROEBLINGS. By HAMILTON SCHUYLER. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1931. $5.

Reviewed by IRVING FINEMAN

FAME seems to favor the imponderable arts. I am not prepared to say why it is that though she has so often crowned the heads of men whose genius is expressed in words scribbled upon perishable paper or in paint laid on frail canvas she has persistently ignored those others whose mediums are sticks and stones and steel and concrete. Ask anyone: who designed Chartres cathedral? — that great symphony in stone; and then mention the works of the architects in sound—Beethoven or Wagner or Franck. And I remember that as a boy avidly gobbling up books the names of Dickens and Dumas and Poe became commonplace to me; but though it was then a thrilling adventure to go downtown and walk across the great Brooklyn Bridge, slung high over the river like a giant web of vines—it seemed to me—between two monstrous jungle trees, the name Roebling meant nothing to me until I grew up and studied engineering.

THE BRIDGES BY WILLIAM C. MCNULTY

And if the name of John A. Roebling is known today outside of engineering circles it is due mainly to the circumstance of his having left behind him sons and grandsons endowed with his extraordinary energy, if not his remarkable genius, to preserve that name in the thriving industry of wire-rope manufacturing which he founded and developed as a tool for his art—suspension bridges. For John Roebling was a genius and an artist, as incontrovertibly as, say, Leonardo da Vinci. There is an aptness in this comparison. Even the few extracts in this book from the voluminous diaries and writings of Roebling discover, as in the notebooks of da Vinci, a restless and versatile mind, keenly observant, articulate, analytical, and imaginative. And it is not too fanciful to ask which might have been the more celebrated had da Vinci pursued his military engineering works to the exclusion of painting and Roebling given up bridge building to cultivate his talent for music.

And curious it is that when he came to this country just a hundred years ago, John Roebling, at the age of twenty-five, a graduate of the Royal Polytechnic Institute of Berlin and well launched in his profession, had given up engineering to head a colonization venture of German immigrants who founded the village of Saxonburg in Pennsylvania. But his genius was stirred by that urgent need for transportation and communication that inspired the nineteenth century in America, and he responded as magnificently as did the anonymous architects of the twelfth century to Europe's need for an expression of its faith. They raised to the glory of God their gothic arches mounted on daring pillars and flying buttresses. He dared to sling his catenaries of steel between towers of stone to the glory of a more temporal faith. He designed and built the first suspension bridge to carry a railroad train—and that across the Niagara. Other major works of his were the Cincinnati-Covington Bridge, and the Pittsburgh-Alleghany Bridge; he built suspension aqueducts for canals, and developed his plant for the manufacture of bridge cables as well as quantities of wire-rope for numerous other purposes. The man was a titan. Having finished his design for the Brooklyn Bridge he died in 1869 as the result of an accident suffered on a survey preliminary to beginning construction. The bridge was built under the supervision of his eldest son, Washington, who was himself later injured in a caisson accident, so badly as to make it necessary for him to conduct the work from his bed, though he lived to a ripe age.

Colonel Washington A. Roebling appears to have inherited his father's executive ability, engineering skill, and articulateness, if not his brilliance. Another son, Charles, inherited his father's fiery temperament, his musical gifts, and a passion for building which he applied to the physical expansion of the Roebling plants; but Charles had none of his father's faculty for expression; he hardly ever wrote a letter. Another son, Ferdinand, who inherited his father's excellent business sense, became Secretary and Treasurer of the company. Edmund, the fourth son, seems to have inherited neither the energy nor any of the various talents of his remarkable father, and gets but a brief page in this book which chronicles the Roeblings to the third and fourth generation.

It is not likely that this book will do much to revivify the great genius of Roebling. It is on the whole not so much a biographical study as a rather pedestrian, naïvely commentaried, and adulatory history of a successful American family, a good part of it concerned with members whose activities as wire-rope manufacturers are no more significant than would be the doings of many another millionaire industrialist in America today. The author's hero is patently not John Roebling so much as his son, Washington, who as the builder of the Brooklyn Bridge certainly proved himself an engineer of outstanding ability and achievement and —under the misfortune that befell him— a man of remarkable fortitude; but that he had not the unique genius of his father is evidenced merely in a comparison of their utterances. Mr. Schuyler, however, seems to find it difficult to view with a biographer's detachment that arrogance of will and violence of temper in John Roebling of which one evidence was his harsh discipline of his son. He seems to deplore, too, Roebling's intellectuality, his early interest in the Hegelian philosophy and in metaphysics, and is inclined to picture him somewhat unsympathetically as an energetic monster of insensibility: "If he ever relaxed there is no sign of it. If he cherished friendships there is nothing to show it. He never expressed delight over a landscape nor admiration for a work of art." This of a man who would not establish his colony in the south because he detested slavery; whose writings are full of the most civilized sentiments; who frequently found time from his stupendous labors to play the flute and the piano; who referred to the railroad and telegraph as "useful works of art," and speaking of suspension bridges referred to "the beautiful forms of the system," and reported of one of his works in progress: "The bridge [Pittsburgh-Alleghany] will be beautiful when entirely completed."

Nor, apparently, has it occurred to the author that it is no accident that John Roebling's Brooklyn Bridge is today the most satisfying esthetically of all the East River bridges—because the man was an artist.

Irving Fineman is a novelist as well as an engineer. His "This Pure Young Man" which appeared in 1930, *won the Longmans, Green prize in its fiction contest.*

Queer Mountain Tribes

TWELVE SECRETS OF THE CAUCASUS. By ESSAD BEY. New York: The Viking Press. 1931. $3.

Reviewed by JAMES FUCHS

TO most Americans brought up on the fare of the Sunday features and pulp magazines, the Caucasus is a Forest of Ardennes, a Coast of Bohemia—a region where anything may happen. It so chances that the country between the Black and Caspian Seas is really a last stronghold of a queer kind of tribal feudalism battling against the inroads of the Machine Age, out-topping in romantic curiosities the boldest inventions of the feature writers. The province called Caucasus is a vast conglomeration of mountain slopes and valleys, immense forests, dells hidden and barred against ready access by steep declivities—a hillbilly country surrounded by strips of maritime flatlands, the whole about as large as the German Empire, though not anywhere as densely populated. The administrative center, Tiflis, is an ultramodern metropolis, with electric tramcars, railroad depots, a wireless station, telephones and every twentieth century convenience, including the latest in aeronautics. But at a distance of less than thirty miles from the metropolis, tribal life, under a rule of petty princes, is still flourishing. It has defended itself and its locally varying peculiarities for exactly a hundred years—from 1820 to the end of the Romanoffs in 1919—against the invasions of Czarist governments, and it still presents a strong though not exactly an unbroken front against the levelling, steam-rolling tendencies of the Bolshevik régime.

The Hundred Years' War of the Caucasus against the Czars bears a certain resemblance to the endless warfare of the natives against the French occupation in Algiers. With this difference: the ethnic composition of the tribes in everlasting revolt against Charles the Tenth, Louis Philippe, the Second Republic, Napoleon the Third, and the Third Republic is not of such a motley aspect as the Caucasian insurrection against Alexander the First, Nicholas the First, Alexander the Second and the Third, and the last of the Romanoffs, Nicholas the Second. There are at least twenty different ethnic groups among the hereditary dwellers within the Caucasus, divided by a dozen varieties of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, with Islam (of a puritanic kind) prevailing in the leadership of armed resistance against Russian onslaughts. In the career of the holy Imam Schamyl, who somehow succeeded in subjecting all the conflicting divisions of mountain folks and keeping the Russian expeditionary forces at bay for thirty years, the national struggle reached its apogee—he was its Abdel-Kadr, and, like the hero of Algiers, he died in exile. But most of the mountain-tribes over which he held fierce sway are still unsubdued and grimly resolved to abide by the ways of their fathers.

There are, literally, several scores of princes holding some sort of petty rule in the Caucasus, and Essad Bey, the author of this exceedingly amusing and instructive volume now made accessible to the English-reading world in an excellent translation, is himself the bearer of a princely title, though, on his own showing, a son of the Caucasian sea border adopted into a mountain tribe by a ceremonial of blood-brotherhood.

As a historian, the author cuts a rather doubtful figure (like most exiles, he relates a good many happenings of the "ain't-so" kind), but the bulk of the volume is devoted to the description of manners rather than to contemporary history, and in description Essad Bey excels. Nearly all the traits of his mountain-folks are faithfully described, and where the detail ceases to be authentic, it remains entertaining to the last. The marvels recounted

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in his pages about marriage customs, vendetta, robber chiefs, tribal fealty, etc., would furnish forth, in expert hands, a dozen attractive films. I give the reader three samples of his ethnographic goods, in the hope that they will cause some to turn to a volume richly paying perusal:

1. Entire villages in the Caucasus are following one hereditary trade—there is a hatmakers' village, a saddle-makers' village, and—marvel of marvels!—a village where all the inhabitants are brought up to the profession of itinerant poets, called Ashuks. The Ashuks are exceedingly quarrelsome and yet, in a way, clannish.

2. It appears that in Daghestan the degree, "Master of Fragrance," is publicly bestowed upon certain skilful compounders of essences and odors, wherewith the bindings and pages of books are sprinkled or fumigated, so as to stress the character and give an indication of the contents of each book so treated.

3. In the Caucasus, as in other parts of the Islamic world, a bride is bought by the tender of money to the prospective father-in-law. The money is frequently paid in instalments, during the initial years of wedded life. The essential unsoundness of trading on the instalment plan is nowhere more apparent. Imagine a man paying for a girl on the "twenty dollars down and ten dollars each time you are hard up" plan. There is, of course, that well-known joker in small type in the contract blank, declaring the entire amount due, ten days after default of a single payment. All managers of subscription-book concerns know what "pulling a set" means. It is a painful process—but what is pulling a set compared with pulling a girl? On my travels through the Caucasus, the tombstone of one of these victims of the Easy Payment Plan was pointed out to me. It bore the following deeply affecting inscription: *Hic iacet Achmet Ali Khan—qui perdidit uxorem dilectam—et cum uxore vitam. Siste, viator—*et *disce, monitus: Ne tradas sine nummo! (Anglice:* Here rests Achmet Ali Khan, who lost his beloved wife, and with her, his life—stay, wanderer, and being warned, learn this: Never trade, unless you have the coin!)

It is good news that the widespread and disastrous thefts from university libraries may be checked by the arrest of a suspect who is to stand trial in a short time. The losses were extensive, the books taken were of importance, and there was every indication that a new and particularly vicious practice was being criminally organized. If the suspect proves to be guilty we hope that there will be no question as to an adequate punishment. Public libraries and particularly university libraries in this country are organized with singular liberality, and the freedom with which books, both common and rare, cheap and valuable, are put at the disposition of vast numbers of readers, has played no small part in the education of the American public. Some "leakage" is to be expected, due usually to absent-mindedness or carelessness, but an organized and skilful attempt to make profits through felonious sale of university and public property in books, if successful and unpunished, might lead to serious restrictions upon the reading habits of the public. Library thieving is mean thieving and vicious thieving, for it hurts a hundred instead of one.

"Poor Samuel Smiles," says the London *Observer,* "has acquired a lot of unpopularity in the course of his century, and now Canon A. J. Carlyle has been describing him in public as a 'fool' and a 'donkey.' That is a little hard on a man who wrote 'Self-Help' with the best intentions in the world, and put into it, like a wise author, just the things that everybody (or nearly everybody) thought at that time. The *laissez faire* idea was one of the wrong turnings of thought which have helped to get us into our present troubles, but it was not Samuel Smiles who invented it, but people much more important, whom no Canon would venture to describe as 'donkeys.' And, after all, is there so much difference between 'Self-Help' and 'Safety First'?"

Mining Frenzy

THE BIG BONANZA: The Story of the Comstock Lode. By C. B. GLASSCOCK. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1931. $3.50.

Reviewed by EDWIN L. SABIN

MR. GLASSCOCK'S narrative details the rise and fall of that extraordinary mining field, in western Nevada about thirty miles down from the Sierra Nevada line of California, where the operations along the remarkable Comstock silver lode made financial history, and where today the ghost town of Virginia City and miles of disintegrated workings wait for a resurrection.

The "Washoe rush" of the winter of 1859-1860 and the succeeding spring, into the desolate, wind-swept Washoe Country of an indefinite "Western Utah," was sectional, being entirely from a Northern California crazed by the report that over east of the mountains there were ledges of solid silver set on edge like silver dollars. But although the excitement was confined, in the main, to the Pacific Coast, and the financial jugglery centered there, the name Comstock has been widely known as signifying the high-tide of mining frenzy and of sudden wealth, of profligate spending, and of reckless stock manipulation.

It is a name that engaged the attention of Congressional lobbyists, debaters, and committees. It is a name upon which huge fortunes, in evidence years after the collapse of the bonanzas, and still active, were founded. For within two decades, or up to 1881, the Comstock mines produced $306,000,000 in bullion, the most of it in a bonanza period of five years in the 'seventies; and of this sum two properties, the Consolidated Virginia and the California, produced $105,000,000. With the history of the Comstock are associated the names Hearst, Mackay of the Postal Telegraph and the Commercial Cable (rivals to the Gould interests), Fair, and Flood who, like Mackay, sought to corner the wheat market, Darius Ogden Mills the head of a distinguished line, E. J. ("Lucky") Baldwin, Senator William M. Stewart, Mark Twain, Oelrichs, Vanderbilt, and many another of national and of world repute.

The "big bonanza" refers particularly to the enormous body of fabulously rich ore opened in the Consolidated Virginia and the California by the owners, Fair, Mackay, Flood, and O'Brien. The great strike, just preceding, by Jones and Hayward in the Crown Point, and by the Bank of California syndicate in the Belcher, might be included. As a forecast of coming events Crown Point stock jumped from $2 a share to $1,825, and Belcher rocketed from $1.50 to $1,525! There can never be another Comstock.

However, when, in 1869, James Fair and John Mackay, pick and shovel laborers turned mine operators, James Flood and William O'Brien, San Francisco saloon-keepers, of Irish blood all, acquired 1,310 feet of supposedly barren ground between two proven properties, the Comstock stocks were at low ebb. The erratic lode seemed to have been sacked. But after four years of exploration of the Consolidated Virginia, chiefly through the bloodhound persistence of Fair (who had "a nose for ore") a tricky lead an eighth of an inch thick widened to seven feet, twelve feet, fifty-four feet, ninety-five feet, assaying up to $650 a ton.

The wonder grew. The first estimate of the values in sight, as broadcast in the Territorial Enterprise which had served as a medium for young Sam Clemens's lively humor was, $116,748,000 displayed in a formation 150 to 320 feet wide. The following estimate by the mining expert Deidesheimer was $1,500,000,000. The director of the mint at Carson City pronounced for $300,000,000 in sight and untold millions farther in. The Consolidated Virginia began to ship $250,000 in bullion a month, and the California soon was fattening the flow.

Within a short time Messrs. Fair, Mackay, Flood, and O'Brien, as majority stockholders, according to Mr. Glasscock, were dividing among themselves over a million dollars a month in dividends. Minor stockholders shared in the output—the monthly dividend from either mine rose to $1,080,000. Consolidated Virginia stock that had been bought at $45 in September, 1874, was quoted at $610 in December and reached $700 in January; California stock at $37 soared to $780. The 1,310 feet of ground valued in 1869 at $40,000 to $50,000 was worth, in 1874, upon stock-market basis, $160,000,000.

The whole Comstock felt the impetus. Anything relating to the Comstock "went." Whereas the Comstock had been "in borrasca" (on the shoals) now it was "in bonanza" (into fortune). The Comstock shares, as listed, good and bad, aggregated almost $400,000,000. The amount of footage represented exceeded the total footage of the mines. In a day shares of stock were bought and sold again at an advance

THE MINER (FROM A PORTRAIT BY BENTON)

of $100. The transfers of one stock board in San Francisco, principally on margins, was $50,000,000 in a month. The recent spasm of national speculation, culminating in 1929, and pointed out by Mr. Glasscock as another example of wild finance, somewhat reflects that mad gamble of 1874-1875 which concentrated at the Pacific Coast.

And when the bears finally gained the upper hand by insistence that the market was sold short and that the Comstock was largely on paper there came the panic which, in the summer of 1875, hit the Comstock stocks for a decline of $60,000,000 in less than a week, toppled the great and powerful Bank of California, and ruined thousands of people, high and low. The effect upon the Big Bonanza itself, however, was slight while the ore was there. Fair, Mackay, Flood, and O'Brien did not depend upon stock inflation for their prosperity. Nevertheless the close arrived in 1879. The available treasure vaults of the Comstock had been emptied at top speed. Consolidated Virginia stock listed at $1.90; California stock at $1.25. The valuation of the thirty mines on the lode dropped from the $393,000,000 of those bonanza days to a beggarly $7,000,000.

A score and more of chronicles dealing with the Comstock have been published, but Mr. Glasscock's comprehensive story brings the action down to the very present. He is enabled to remind us that contact with the Big Bonanza still exists, as witness the much discussed union of Irving Berlin and Ellin Mackay, granddaughter of John Mackay the Irish immigrant and Comstock magnate. Since the book was written a claimant to the Flood estate has figured in the California courts. Moreover, Comstock millions, including those of Adolph Sutro who drove the Sutro tunnel in spite of Comstock opposition were applied to vast enterprises, public and private, not only in California and Nevada but elsewhere, and these endure as monuments to wealth which, acquired whether legitimately or illegitimately, was well expended.

With one or two exceptions the illustrations for "The Big Bonanza" are reproductions of old views and portraits.

Familiar Birds

WHY BIRDS SING. By JAQUES DELAMAIN. Translated by RUTH and ANNA SARASON. New York: Coward-McCann. 1931. $2.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT CUSHMAN MURPHY

THIS book, "crowned by the French Academy," must be judged as a translation. From this it doubtless suffers for, while not without fine passafges, it also abounds in unidiomatic phrases, strange punctuation, and incorrect uses or forms of English words.

As to the substance of the work, it presents a series of compositions played on one string, which reveal the keen observation and esthetic spirit of a gifted naturalist. Descriptions of the habits of many familiar birds of France, and hence of most of western Europe, are fresh, exact, full of *verve,* and rich in information. The imagery, and the implications of many factual matters upon life and thought, are neat and typically Gallic, while familiar concepts of ornithology are so worded that they are driven home. Only among the woods, fields, and wildernesses of the land, we are told, has bird music reached a high plane; the sea has not a single singer. The flock spirit kills the artist; it is the birds of large family territory which reach the heights of song. Moreover, bad influence may degrade, and if the lyrical blackcap chances to nest in a marshy region its pure melody becomes tainted by the raucous notes of the sedge warbler.

When it comes to a biological interpretation of certain behavior patterns of birds, the general reader of Delamain's book is less likely to be helped than led astray. There is no evidence, for example, that instincts proceed from ancestral habits. Neither do most birds migrate southward because of a change or shortage of their natural food; on the contrary, many leave while the supply is still waxing. And as for the idea that birds are conscious "musicians," striving for individual preëminence and appreciative of the efforts of their fellows—plenty of experimental evidence stands to show that this is sheer fantasy.

A Balanced Ration for a Week's Reading

THE HARBOURMASTER. By WILLIAM MCFEE. *Doubleday, Doran.*

A chronicle not so much of the sea as of a man of the sea.

WHAT DARE I THINK? By JULIAN HUXLEY. *Harpers.*

A discussion along ethical and biological lines.

THE LITERARY MIND. By MAX EASTMAN. *Scribners.*

A study of the psychology of literature.

The Saturday Review of LITERATURE

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A Crop of Stories

THE BEST SHORT STORIES OF 1931 AND THE YEARBOOK OF THE AMERICAN SHORT STORY. Edited by EDWARD J. O'BRIEN. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company. 1931. $2.50.

THE BEST BRITISH SHORT STORIES OF 1931. The same.

Reviewed by ROBERT WHITCOMB

MR. O'BRIEN, now one of America's literary institutions, rests his reputation upon his unerring punctuality, his undoubtable assiduousness, his statistical genius, and his controversial judgments. Every year since the World War he has had a volume of the "best" short stories of the year prepared, whether the publishers would take them or not (most of the time they have). His yearly pronunciamentos on the art of short story writing usually harvest a bumper crop of hair-splittings, thus placing Mr. O'Brien among those few authors who know without a doubt that their productions are read by somebody. But so scientific are his categories that it would be impossible to prove him wrong, as so many tried to do when he started in the "best" short story business.

For instance, he arranges his authors strictly according to the alphabet, the short stories neatly compiled, and then he tags on (in the American volume) a glossary of abbreviations, lists of magazines publishing this and that, a Roll of Honor, biographical notes, lists of books and articles on the subject of short stories, and mathematical percentages of "distinctive" short stories, and so on, ending with an index and all interspersed with a system of asterisks to indicate merit or demerits, even as it was in school. Nevertheless and notwithstanding the science he uses, there is plenty of room for questioning his choices.

In this year's introduction to the American short stories (there is none to speak of in the English compilation) Mr. O'Brien commits himself on trends, shortly and sweetly—and firmly. He emphasizes last year's conviction that the transition period in American writing has passed on from ferment to integration, indeed, that the transition period is definitely passé, or at least moribund, and it is to be recorded that he says this in defiance of the voluminous wordage creatively collected by the behaviorists. Then, pointing his finger, he gives the experimental magazines a boost, saying that writers who appear in them generally get into more permanent places later. He mentions some of these authors specifically, including Kay Boyle, the latest. This, however, is not the only way in which he boosts the experimental sheets. He reprints several stories from them, including such fugitives as *Story, This Quarter, Hound and Horn, The Midland, The American Oxonian, The Frontier, and Experiment.* Indeed, this may prove to be Mr. O'Brien's chief usefulness. Who else would take the trouble to dig out these actual works of art, things by unknown names? The "best" short stories may have ideological deficiencies, but at least a few writers who are dealing with feudal editorial dictatorship can here have one short flight of freedom. Mr. O'Brien has taken up the idea of becoming an editor of editors. It is an old gag, but now we have it in action with new writers, as well as older ones, even though the result is an anthology of decidedly uneven reading.

In the American book are some good ones, and also some bad ones. Three of them come from the *Saturday Evening Post:* one of William Hazlett Upson's salesman stories about earthworm tractors, in which Salesman Botts gets rid of yet another tractor in Italy; a visionary and unusual sea story, by Guy Gilpatrick; and a new one by F. Scott Fitzgerald about an American situation in Paris, one of several stories about expatriates chosen by Mr. O'Brien. The *American Mercury* also gets three stories: "The Enigma," by Louis Adamic, told with Slavic intensity and good prose; "That Evening Sun Go Down," by the inevitable William Faulkner; and an Americanese anecdote by George Milburn. *Story,* a mimeographed magazine just out, published in Austria, has three stories: a skit by Kay Boyle; a French-American mood full of French words by Whit Burnett, to whom, incidentally, Mr. O'Brien dedicates the book under discussion; and "One With Shakespeare," a fine study of adolescent female artistic egotism by one Martha Foley. Two stories come from the *Cosmopolitan:* an excellent one by Louis Bromfield, probably the best story in the book; and a sketch of some newlyweds by Dorothy Parker that is amusing in spite of some sexual hinting. The most workmanlike story in the book is a lengthy psychological discussion of an artist and his woman in a lonely, mountainous spot, by Alvah C. Bessie, published originally in *The Hound and Horn.* Mr. Bessie is a newcomer to be reckoned with. One of the most enjoyable bits of writing anywhere is the story from *This Quarter* by Josephine Herbst, and the provincialism of Lowry Charles Winberly, the only thing from the *Forum,* uses some new Americanesque.

ILLUSTRATION BY EDWARD ARDIZZONE FROM "MODERN BOOK ILLUSTRATION"

Mr. O'Brien's tabulation of English short stories seems simpler, although the separation of English from American seems quite arbitrary sometimes. Anyhow, it seems that modern English stories are taking on the American tinge, and becoming readable. Mr. O'Brien's favorite English magazines are the *London Mercury* (six stories), *This Quarter* (three stories), the *Adelphi,* and the *New Statesman.*

"Poppied Corn"

THE COLLECTED POEMS OF RICHARD BURTON. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1931.

Reviewed by O. W. FIRKINS

Darkness and doubt and despair
Vanish at touch of the May!
Songs? It inhabits the air;
Love? It bewitches the way.

A POET stands at the tent-flap or door-post. To the sentinel asking for a countersign, to the lord of the manor asking for a signet-ring, I offer that stanza. Admission will not be delayed.

Mr. Alfred Kreymborg in a sympathetic and discriminating preface speaks of these poems as the outcome of "human love, fellowship, labor, song, philosophy, faith." These things or their spectra, can be found elsewhere. What was once usual but is now rare is their combination with literature and skill. Many people exist to whom that combination is dear and for whom its appearance in contemporary work is always a rarer experience and a lessening hope. That audience pre-exists. It may or may not be an audience which, in present-day conditions of reviewership and readership, it will be easy to marshal and convene.

The volume confirms and illustrates the lyrist's confession (or avowal) in the second of the two introductory poems that he chants or paints nothing but his own soul. We get only lyric and we get pure lyric. Drama there is none, though a three page dialogue called the Prologue is perhaps the intellectual (not the artistic) summit of the collection. There is no real narrative here; the ballads with which a typical short-span writer, a typical lyrist like Whittier, diversifies and objectifies his work, are undiscoverable in Richard Burton's work. The author is a critic, scholar, and teacher; the lyrics, very fittingly and wisely, have shaken from their plumes the dust of shelf and desk. Not Herrick, not Heine, not Verlaine, is more exclusively and unreservedly lyrical.

All this implies a deep subjectivity, a jealous subjectivity that will not give place, will not suffer encroachment, even from ballad to anecdote. Nevertheless, poems are, on one side, objective. Their incitements are objective. The inner life waits for a signal, a beacon, from the outer life. It may surprise the reader that in three hundred markedly and purely lyrical poems the love-poems should be so few, and, apart from the "Last Stile" (exceptional in this as in its high and perfect beauty), should be so detached, so impersonal. What is left for the pure singer, the singer of pure self, to do but hymn his love?

Of this there is a possible and pointed explanation. Life is self-repeating, is a pattern. In this pattern, deep, lasting passions and high poetry—their consequence—may appear. But there is a part of life that is not patterned, a part from day to day is unforeseeable, and the poems of Richard Burton are occasional in the sense that, not their substance, but their immediate promptings and suggestions are drawn from the general, shifting, planless course of things, from life at large. They are drawn largely, almost predominantly from landscape; from a sight in the street, from a phrase in a book; from a strain of music, from a reviving memory. The great permanencies of feeling, the blood-bond, the love-clasp, hardly appear, though what we may call the general response to life, to particular suggestion in life—the tendernesses, the humanities, the compassions—is wakeful, warm, and constant. In the elegy on his friend, the Minnesota poet, Arthur Upson, he almost, or quite, transcends this limitation, and produces a threnody which for pure feeling (not, of course, for flawless and exalted art) is better than either "Lycidas" or "Thyrsis." I quote the XIIIth, XVIIth, and XVIIIth stanzas:

I hardly know if sorrow or content
Have mastery as I brood upon thy loss:
Such comforting large thoughts are someway blent
With haunting pain; the shadow of a cross
Is all uplit with radiance, and a voice
Weeping, becomes a voice that doth rejoice.

* * *

Then felt I need of thee to share the sight:
It was too delicate to win the praise
Of many easy-moved to quick delight
In obvious skies that follow usual days;
But this, so marvelous in mood and tone,
This afterglow seemed meant for us alone.

Alas, the summer waits thee! All her shows
Heaped up and heavenly proffer thee their boon,
And yet in vain the great procession goes;
Its chronicler no more beneath the moon,
Nor when the noon is high, walks as of yore:
Thy passing hath bereaved both sea and shore,
The very sea seems silent evermore!

Two things remain to be said: a reservation and a tribute. The behavior of these poems is admirable. That is a merit; but they are perhaps a little too conscious of the perfection of their own behavior. Personally, I believe in bounds: against all the slack revolts and nerveless mutinies of my contemporaries, I believe in bounds as the means to enfranchisements. Poetry should have its hedge, but in my garden, if I owned a garden, that hedge should be invisible. The pales which keep out trespass and ravage should be so interlaced with creeper and hawthorn that the orchard close itself should seem to be merely a part of the boscage or the wildwood. In Richard Burton's verse that hedge is visible.

Branching from the same stem as this defect is one of the great superiorities of the book. It images, it records, it embodies, a life that is more real and greater than itself; it is one of the few testimonies in latter-day verse to the possibility of such a life. In one of the drawings shown by Jane Eyre to Rochester, under a sullen sky a cormorant holds in its beak a gemmed bracelet; a drowning swimmer thrust up from the deep the arm from which that bracelet had been snatched. Most poetry today is like that bracelet: most poets are like the drowning swimmer (the cormorant is the publisher). Richard Burton's poetry is not the salvage of a spent and wasted life; it is the record and the promise of high being. I close with eight lines entitled "A Potion."

How brew the brave drink Life?
Take of the herb hight morning-joy,
Take of the herb hight evening-rest,
Pour in pain lest bliss should cloy,
Shake in sin to give it zest;
Brew them all in the heat of noon,
Cool the broth beneath the moon;
Then down with the brave drink Life!

Oscar W. Firkins, professor of comparative literature at the University of Minnesota, is one of the outstanding poetry critics of the country.

Defense of Nothing

IN DEFENSE OF TOMORROW. By ROBERT DOUGLAS BOWDEN. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1931. $2.

Reviewed by SUZANNE LA FOLLETTE

MR. BOWDEN'S book, one learns from the jacket, was awarded a prize of $3,000 in a contest on "the soul of America." When I read this impressive information I felt a bit diffident about reviewing the book; for when it comes to the soul of America I may as well frankly confess, in the words of A. Ward, that "I skurcely know what those air." But a careful reading has convinced me that Mr. Bowden skurcely knows either. I start, therefore, where he leaves off, and if I have any luck we may come out about even.

It would be hard to differentiate between Mr. Bowden's concept of the soul of America and that fostered by Mr. Hoover's official ballyhoo-men. His patriotic enthusiasm is no less unbridled and indiscriminate than theirs, and his English no better. "The older European civilization" he exclaims, with more fervor than elegance, "did not cross the Atlantic only to flower more luxuriantly in virgin soil, for the new society in the United States is not merely another Renaissance; it is the creation of new conceptions." These conceptions, one gathers, are about as follows: political and religious liberty, democracy, popular education, a wide distribution of wealth—all informed and directed by the scientific spirit.

> Science is the basis of modern civilization because of its utter impartiality and its sense of kinship with a common humanity. . . . Science, founding a firmer basis and stimulating motive for the coöperation of mankind, goes widening down the centuries, and sympathy and pity bind the courses together.

Nothing so exclusively American here, when one comes to reflect upon it; not even Mr. Bowden's dithyramb on science. These conceptions are the common heritage of the Western European peoples. That does not exclude the possibility that the American nation, in applying them practically, has made them peculiarly its own. Unfortunately Mr. Bowden does not convince one that it has; and he fails chiefly, I think, because he has neglected to account, in the true scientific spirit, for all the relevant facts.

When, for example, he dwells on the humanitarian achievements of science, one wonders whether he has forgotten its less humanitarian achievements such as the weapons of modern warfare, which our own Government utilized during the late great war with no more show of

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sympathy and pity than any foreign Power. When he speaks of the social forces making for a juster distribution of wealth in this country, one wonders whether he deliberately disregards the fact that each year an increasingly larger share of our national income goes to the few who possess great fortunes and a correspondingly smaller share to the many who possess no fortunes at all. When he expatiates upon our "judicial and political freedom" surely he must knowingly overlook our "criminal syndicalism" laws and such political persecutions as come out in the Atlanta cases and the famous Mooney and Sacco-Vanzetti cases; and when he depicts the "upsurging masses" with their high wages and their comforts and luxuries he may forget, but his readers are not likely to, that several million American workers now have no wages at all, and that in certain industries, such as the Southern cotton mills and the coal mines of West Virginia and Kentucky, many thousands are starving on the job. All these embarrassing aspects of American life are as much a part of the new era on which Mr. Bowden says we have entered since 1914 as any he has seen fit to mention; and as such they are relevant to his discussion. One would expect a more objective and inclusive survey of that era from a writer who is head of the department of social sciences in an American college. Or perhaps, on second thought, one would not.

When the professor looks at American culture he finds that it

> has broken through the frontiers of older cultures, ever pushing into new fields hitherto never reached . . . the achievement of a culture that will measure up to America's requirements of a cultured person, which are more exacting than those of any other culture, is not a simple matter. Admittedly the standards by which we judge a cultured individual are as much in advance of the European standard as our standard of living is in advance of theirs.

Let us leave Mr. Bowden's unpleasant glorification of American culture through disparagement of cultures not American, and turn to Mr. Bowden on American education. The standard of scholarship in America is low, he admits, but

> . . . the liberal education toward which the American democracy is driving, with some success, aims to inculcate in the larger numbers that come out of the mass not only more skills but a wider field for the employment of those skills. It wants to help him achieve a degree of inner freedom which is the first fruit and final justification of all education.

Which leaves one wishing that our liberal education had inculcated in Mr. Bowden a greater skill in writing and a much greater skill in thinking. His whole book—I say it regretfully—is a depressing commentary on the poverty of American education and American culture.

The Great Charles

CHARLES OF EUROPE. By D. B. WYNDHAM LEWIS. New York: Edwin V. Mitchell and Coward-McCann. 1931. $5.

Reviewed by SOPHUS KEITH WINTHER

MR. LEWIS'S study of Charles V, King of Spain, Naples, Sicily, Spanish Lands in the New World, and Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire is not a conventional biography. He writes with vigor and enthusiasm; blending scholarship and religious fervor for the cause of Catholicism and the glory of his hero. His frank, almost naïve, faith in the potential good of Europe united under Catholicism lends charm to his study. He accepts no halfway measures. Europe was ruined by the philosophy of Luther, and a narrow "religion of nationalism"; a nationalism divorced from the true patriotism of the Holy Empire.

No matter what one's faith may be this point of view is just right for the subject. Charles V had no sympathies with Luther's characterization of religion as "not universal but of local genius, variable, personal, and to be identified with temperaments, prejudices, climate, social and economic conditions, and other contingencies." His faith and his Empire rested upon a lofty and uncompromising Catholic tradition of many centuries. Mr. Lewis accepts Charles's point of view in his stirring account of this crucial period in European history.

This biography is rich in personalities. Henry VIII, François I, Luther, the "Little Monk," Wolsey, Mary Tudor, and Charles V are all familiar figures in a splendid and tragic pageant. Mr. Lewis has not avoided the complexities of his subject as they arose in handling such a multitude of figures, nor has he allowed his scholarship to obscure the fact that he was writing for the lay reader. His work is neither pedantic nor dull.

After completing the biography he adds an epilogue in which he openly expresses his personal opinion on the social and economic implications of the Reformation. This section is good for the devout though it may prove unconvincing to others who are not likely to agree that many ills of the modern world can be traced to Luther's door. Mr. Lewis says: "By formally rejecting reason and by severing so many Europeans from those supernatural and supernational benefits which the Universal Church dispenses, Luther's self-sufficient and arrogant philosophy created those malignant discords from which Europe is suffering so acutely today."

As partial evidence of his thesis he cites Russia as a nation that is being destroyed by the individualistic philosophy that dates from Luther.

This provocative thesis will be balm to the faithful, but it will not disarm the skeptics, for whom the Middle Ages hold no promise of Utopia.

Science Humanized

WHAT DARE I THINK? By JULIAN HUXLEY. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1931. $2.

Reviewed by HENRY TRACY

THE title of this book is unfortunate. It does not sound like Julian Huxley, and it suggests a personal and impulsive assertion of faith, which it is very far from being. It is a carefully ordered attempt to think simultaneously in ethical and biological terms. If any reader thinks such an attempt foredoomed to failure, he had better not read the book, since it assumes a point of view so far successfully denied to experts in science. *Qua* scientists, it has been maintained, they can have nothing to say on ethical and religious subjects. True enough; but Mr. Huxley has formed, or has inherited from Thomas Huxley, a view of life in which such burdens as he assumes here are binding. He would like to call his view human, and expand it here as a form of "Scientific Humanism." Prejudice, and recent distortions of the phrase, prevent that and have compelled the substitute title of which I complain.

Advances in biological research have brought that science to a point where it has, whether we like it or not, a bearing on practically all human problems, including the control of our environment, the development of individuals, the development of the race, and, finally, the intangibles of faith and belief. It has these bearings—it cannot avoid having them—and therefore, Mr. Huxley has argued, it is better for those who are conversant with the science at first hand to articulate it with ethical and religious thinking, instead of leaving things to drift as they may.

The artificial parasitization of the palm moth in the Fiji Islands, which saved the cocoanut palms from extinction, seems not only a praiseworthy but an obligatory deed—given our knowledge of control by parasites. But the practice of cutting down forests and leaving the deforested lands untended seems an unnecessary and a heartless practice. By these and numerous other instances Mr. Huxley illustrates the need of constant application of biological knowledge and skill to our problems of environment. Once seen, these applications become obligatory—or they so become if we accept his view, which is humanistic in a special sense. If obligatory, then ethical.

It is curious how a moral view of man's relations to himself and society seems to rear itself out of the nature of things in the course of an argument like this. And this in spite of an admission at the start

DESIGN FOR THE JACKET OF "THE HARBOURMASTER."

that "the knowledge provided by science is emotionally and morally neutral." It is. It can be used "for whatever ends its possessor sees fit." Such ends, it occurs to the reviewer, might include the enslaving of whole populations for exploitation by a few in possession of the power. And that, precisely, is the reason why the view back of this exegesis is possibly more important that the marshalling of data along biochemical lines, up to the minute, competent as that is.

We have, it seems, acquired a view, an attitude toward scientific discovery and knowledge of its powers for good and bad, which reflects the best cultural feeling in an ethical field. That view is embodied here. The personal attitude of a young and gifted biologist named Julian Huxley toward religions and beliefs in general, shrinks into insignificance in consideration of what his writing reveals of the sound social thinking which this new view entails. It is to the nth degree modern, yet it is not "radical" and it cannot be superimposed, happily, or without discrepant outline, on the Russian view. That is because it is Western, and does not evolve from a core of absolutism which is so apparent under a communistic camouflage. In fact a good part of one chapter is devoted to showing how concepts involving an absolute go over into fixations and result in persecutions, fanaticisms, and violence to one or another aspect of the spirit of man.

Mr. Huxley's view is not one which he has developed in isolation. It obviously is held by a large body of enlightened thinkers for whom he makes himself the spokesman. And in it there is no place for intolerance, even for organized religion. Hostile interference with any Church as such would be inconceivable under it. There would be no ridicule of mystics. All these, and all similar esthetic predilections are recognized as among the intangibles without which no society could progress.

"Self-sacrifice and ascetism can be experienced as of the utmost value . . ." but "if you really believed the medieval Christian schemes you were bound to be intolerant, bound to persecute and establish inquisitions."

Perhaps this sums it up: "The scientific approach involves a fundamental change of outlook." It is that change which is interpreted here. And let it be understood that the effect of such a change is not, in the mind of this author, the dispiriting thing it has become in so many modernistic writings. Bertrand Russell is bleak in comparison. John Cowper Powys suffers from deep and smouldering anger against some entity he calls "God." Aldous Huxley is depressing. These men have touched some source of blight and inner injury. Hence their aura of gloom. Julian Huxley has been more fortunate. He has not, any more than these others, seen the ultimate thing among values, but he moves toward it with a certain confidence. His work is restorative, and has been so from the first.

A Tale of the Sea

THE HARBOURMASTER. By WILLIAM MCFEE. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

THIS odyssey of an English sailor Ulysses and a Latin Penelope, not placid in love, which William McFee has written in "The Harbourmaster" is a powerful tale of sailors not in struggle with the sea but even more helpless in conflict with the forces of the unfamiliar land upon which women live. Telling his novel through a seaman storyteller, Mr. McFee has preserved in his book both the sailor's sea-made integrity and the sailor's romantic cyninism grown in the seclusion of the sea after visiting the complex and fantastic shore.

Chief Engineer Spenlove tells his story to colorless American tourists while the *S. S. Camotan* lies in the harbor at Puerto Balboa, off the shore where Captain Fraley and his supposed wife lie dead and revolutionists are burning the railroad into the mountains. The leisurely recital is briefly both of the friendship of sailors, Fraley, shipmaster, and Spenlove, engineer, and of Fraley's romance and tragedy as seen through Spenlove's eyes. Spenlove is no cynic for all his pretense. He watches, tender himself, Fraley's love affairs, first with the sexless, self-absorbed, capable American, which comes to nothing, and then his overwhelming passion for the lovely sister of a dance-hall Frenchwoman who had been his mistress. He follows their continually antagonistic passion for each other through the war, through Fraley's loss of his command, to his going ashore as harbormaster at a Central American port. Even on shore no adjustment between the lovers is possible, and the inevitable tragedy is merely hastened to its conclusion.

In this story of Captain Fraley and Francine le Grand, Mr. McFee has not contented himself with any single conflict. He has handled well the familiar drama in a sailor's love, the recurrent separation which the sea makes, the old romanticism that sailors have loves in every port. Into his drama, too, he brings the clash of both temperament and race, of chill English honor and passionate Latin crime. Such a combination of conflicts could only lead—and Mr.McFee has logically followed—to tragedy. The chief flaw of the book is that so obvious are the seeds of tragedy and so profusely has Mr. McFee sewn them that the outcome, tragic as it is, is, when it arrives, less moving than it should be.

As is often the case in novels with a storyteller, Engineer Spenlove emerges in more reality as a character than either of the two principal figures of his story. He stops too often to indulge in a sailor's gossippy philosophy to keep the story of the principals moving at a dramatic pace. He emerges understandable from his own words, but his words make us see Captain Fraley and Francine, constantly unhappy, constantly bickering, as rather fools than heroes. They are well drawn as human beings at the outset of their story, but each continues to the end what each was at the beginning. The profusion of conflicts in which they live changes them not at all. A stimulating character is Mr. Padapopoulos, who began his career by murder in Salonica, fits snugly into the American underworld, and yet is, or rather tries to be and fails, the guardian angel of Mrs. Fraley, whom he loves.

Where Mr. McFee does write of the sea, there is, excellently as he has written of the land, the emergence of a more vital reality. The very best of the book, perhaps, is that brief and exciting part in which Captain Fraley aids the woman he loves to escape on his cruiser after she has killed her sister, and at the same time with steady shipmaster's nerves sinks a German U-boat on the flight to Alexandria. A beautiful sea passage, too, is that in which Francine, survivor of a sunken vessel, comes up from the sea to Captain Fraley's deck, a goddess coming up out of the Ægean. McFee, Conrad being dead, is still the master of the sea. Sea and land, this is a vigorous book, not without faults but rich with detail and ideas and the ugliness and color of the world.

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The BOWLING GREEN

Nation Wide

I. PREFACE

I WAS about to speak of this as a biography, but perhaps it is more in the nature of an encyclopædia, or encyclical. It is the Round Robin of Richard Roe. The way I happened to undertake it was peculiar.

I drove into town from the country to do an errand. Approaching the building to which my business called me I was surprised to see that since my last visit a block of old houses across the street had been demolished. In their place was a large vacant lot smoothed with cinders, and a sign PARK HERE, 1 HOUR 35c, 4 HOURS 50c. Accepting this as one of the convenient miracles that happen, I left the roadster there and went about my appointment.

My affair didn't last long, and when I returned to the parking space the hour was not quite up. At first I congratulated myself on being able to escape with the minimum fee. Then I reflected how much I would save by leaving the car there a while longer. If I took the full four hours, the rate would only be 12½ cents an hour. It was a brilliant winter noon and I was tempted by the idea of rambling about the streets in leisurely haphazard. Most of my visits to the city are so compactly timetabled that there is little room for the zigzags of chance. My foot was already on the running board of the car when this happy impulse seized me.

I strolled off at random, luxuriating in a sense of ease. It was one of those rare moods when one feels suddenly abreast of life. For the moment I had Caught Up. There were no letters that should have been answered, no appointments at the dentist, no Unfinished Business. There were toothpaste and shaving cream and mouthwash in the medicine cabinet at home. Of course there were a few pollicitations, but nothing irrevocable. Idling along the pavement I enjoyed the colorful shop windows. I had the immensely superior feeling with which one who does not need to buy anything contemplates the anxious ingenuity of merchants eager to reduce inventory. I talked to myself in that tone of affectionate approval which does us so much good when self-administered. "Good old boy," I said. "A breathing space!" I checked over my methodical pocket-system. Money, yes; keys and penknife, yes; pipe, matches, tobacco, yes; wallet, yes; driving license, yes; memorandum book, yes; handkerchief and spare handkerchief, yes, yes. For a few minutes I was my own reassuring yes-man. My clothes felt elderly and familiar; the whole physiological mass of my body was orderly and comforting. Self-approval, as usual, led to a larger benevolence. Drifting up the sunny street I enjoyed the rich variation of human types. How agile, kindly and enigmatic they were. With what physical dexterity they moved, weaving in and out, avoiding collisions. "Good old boy," I repeated, and found myself walking fast just by habit. "Godlike, godlike! I can think of a thousand shames and errors, yet here we are, Riding on the Moment." (Sometimes I prefer to think of myself as *we* rather than *I;* it is less embarrassing.) Even catching sight of my reflection in the windows did not grieve me for more than an instant. "There are always compensations, old son," I persuaded myself.

You must not think this candor irrelevant. It is only in this brief preface that the biographer intrudes upon your notice. I am not accustomed to writing, and an inexperienced author probably reveals more than is mannerly. But I cannot expect you to believe I have been honest with Richard Roe unless I can be equally honest with myself. But by the irony of chance, as I moved blithely along that street like a unanimous convention of instructed delegates, I approached the most doubtful and arduous task of a lifetime.

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I paused at a corner, partly to knock out my pipe on a lamp-post and partly to undergo the delicious pangs of indecision. Which way should I turn? Any of these four streets might reach to the end of the earth. An idiotic phrase, I then reflected, because all four, if accurately and inexorably prolonged, would come directly back to the same spot. Provided, that is, that the earth is a perfect sphere. "But it isn't!" I exclaimed to myself joyfully.

"What isn't?" said a voice, and George Work greeted me in his usual quizzical humor. How is it that you so often meet just the people you need? With so enormously many chances of not meeting, how does it happen? Or is it that when you encounter someone, you instantly (with a dangerously subtle convulsion of soul) revise your whole existence into the appropriate phase of *you* that exists for him? Pitiable chameleons that we are! Oh, by taking different turnings or stepping briefly into cigar-stores and soda-fountains have we missed the very meetings we most needed?

"It *isn't* a perfect sphere, that's the grand thing about it," I explained.

He uttered a vulgar monosyllable, coarsely plural but appropriate. "What are you doing in town on Saturday?" he asked. "Come and have some lunch."

I had no particular desire for lunch, but I had committed myself to chance and it would have been dishonest to demur. George led me a couple of blocks eastward and rang at an iron-grilled door beneath the front stoop of a dingy old brownstone dwelling. It was a surreptitious Mediterranean hideaway where the regular customers eat not in the front dining-room but in the kitchen itself, with the family. Madame, in an ample white apron, presides at the stove. The *patron* in shirtsleeves slices huge lengths of crisp loaf and shakes cocktails at a sideboard. There is no menu, you eat whatever happens to be on the fire, and it's delicious. There is a Provençal aroma of roast lamb just faintly rubbed with garlic, and tall greenish bottles of white *ordinaire* on the big table. All this George explained to me as we neared the place. He was one of a mixed little group that usually lunched there on Saturdays. He was eloquent on the subject. Cold winter afternoons when the dusk comes early; the sense of snugness and a bolted door. The glowing stove and the white steam of soup mixed with the grey smoke of cigarettes. The crackle of breadsticks. Madame's little girl studying her lessons (in "Americanism") at a tiny desk in one corner. On the walls the rainbow calendars of Italian grocery jobbers. These appealed to George, who is a salesman for a big lithographing house, and thereby regarded by the others as the artistic member of their cenacle.

There were six or seven gentlemen already at table, and George introduced me. I am not naturally clever at names, and some of them were difficult to catch, but as usual I tried to fix them in my mind by simple association-pictures. Mr. Vogelsang was easy, for behind him hung the canary cage. For Mr. Schaefer I conjured up a flock of sheep. Mr. Furness I symbolized as heating apparatus, and Mr. Von Ulm as a tall elm tree. My experience at one time as a collection-manager taught me how important this mental habit is. Often a customer who comes in to ask for an extension can be persuaded to pay something if his name is tactfully remembered.

Just as I was greeting the men at the far end of the table, Madame leaned over them with a big bowl of soup. A glass of wine was tipped over by accident, and in the general halloo I missed their names. One was a man of perhaps fifty, medium sized and slightly gray; his face though heavily lined had a fresh color and clear hazel eyes that were unusually friendly. While everyone else was shouting he had already mopped up the puddle. But I didn't pay special attention to him, for I was busy focussing my pictures of birds, sheep, furnaces and elm trees. Also there was nothing in his manner that an expert in overdue accounts would be likely to recognize. He looked thirty-day pay, unquestionably reliable. As I now recall the scene I realize that he had a talent for not being noticeable—except perhaps that he kept the ash on his cigar longer than anyone else in that group would have been likely to. Yet he was not conspicuously silent. He said one thing I still remember. "Not long ago I went up Riverside Drive at night on a bus. Suddenly an electric sign across the river flashed on in the dark, caught me right on the eyeball. It said THE TIME IS NOW 5.59. You know, the damn thing frightened me."

Because I once worked for a publisher George considers me phenomenally "literary," and it was his idea of tact to turn the conversation on books. He did so by remarking that he himself never read them; every book he had been told was really worth while he had found unbearably dull, except a few detective stories. What with the lithographing business, the movies, bridge, and radio, he did not find books necessary. His idea of chivalry was to leave them for women and children. One of the others suggested that biographies were a good kind of reading. George said he had tried a biography once but found nothing in it he could apply to his own perplexities. The trouble is, he said, the kind of people they write biographies about are too darned different. Now a biography of Bill Schaefer, he added, that would be something like. I could get that.

"I daresay," retorted Schaefer. "Biographies are quite useless unless they're written about people you know a lot about already."

"Another trouble about them," said George, "you know it's all over anyhow; it worked itself out some way or another." He looked unusually serious for a moment. "Poor devils," he added suddenly.

Mr. Vogelsang said that on a long business trip he had read Papini's Life of Christ with great profit; it had done more for his selling morale than any amount of letters from the home office. Mr. Von Ulm objected to this point of view; he said it was sacrilege. The argument became vigorous, and as honorably absurd as most disputes of its kind. It might have gone on endlessly but eventually Schaefer said "Well, you gentlemen can fight it out. I've got to go; I'm getting behind with my home work." When he had gone I noticed that the gray man had gone too.

"Who was that?" I asked.

"Who, Bill Schaefer? You know the Schaefer Windshield Wiper don't you? You've seen their ads in the Saturday Evening Post."

"No, no," I said. "The quiet fellow who smoked a cigar."

"Oh, has Dick gone? So he has. His name's Roe; Richard Roe."

"Richard Roe?" I asked. "The name's familiar, somehow."

"Sure," said George. "Dick says he was called that because he's the fellow who always gets just a little the worst of it in the contracts with John Doe."

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That was the only time I ever saw Richard Roe. Certainly I cannot be accused of being prejudiced by intimate personal relations. How it came about, after his death, that I undertook this biography of him, will be apparent in due course. That evening as I drove back to the country (the man at the parking space insisted that after four hours the time began again, and I had to pay 35 cents for the fifth hour) the thought of Richard Roe was least in my mind.

The difficulties involved in collecting material for this biography may fairly be mentioned. The footprints of one who trod so lightly, and with such complete ignorance of his own possible importance, are soon obliterated. He had made no provision for being remembered: it was one of the many things that never occurred to him. His family, his friends, and his business associates were not only surprised and shocked at my project but have placed considerable obstacles in my way. It is generally agreed, apparently, that the lives of such men are better left unrecorded. Also in conscientiously assembling testimony from many different sources I find contradictions and inconsistencies that would horrify a more dogmatic editor. In spite of these discouragements I have persevered, but the reader must let me compile the memoir in my own way; casually and in fragments, as it came to me. Now that I can see the story in a long perspective I understand that many seemingly grotesque or trivial episodes were in legitimate continuity, and logical preparation for his final achievement.

I look back with a miserable sense of frustration when I realize that I once sat at table with Richard Roe himself and guessed so little. If I had known then a fraction of what I do now, how I should have longed to tell him that I also understood. But to know what we need to know, at the moment when we need to know it, is few men's privilege. He was gone almost before I knew he was there. There are many like that. To all such I dedicate this record. Like Richard Roe I am frightened when I see electric letters flash out IT IS NOW 5.59. Therefore, though the data are incomplete, I delay no longer.

(To be continued)

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

THE MESSIAH OF ISMIR: Sabbatai Zevi. By JOSEF KASTEIN. Translated by HUNTLEY PATERSON. New York: The Viking Press. 1931. $3.50.

HISTORY is painted with unnumbered Messiahs. They show common characteristics to such an amazing extent that one would be justified in referring to the Messianic type as a particular psychological variety. A man, or woman, of mystical tendencies, deeply read in the sacred scriptures of the race, comes to believe in and to assert the possession of supernatural powers which are readily accepted by superstitious followers, and eventually descends to lies, charlatanry, and forged documents to support otherwise indefensible claims. The type is usually subject to nervous disorders and is sexually pathological.

Sabbatai Zevi, the seventeenth century Jewish hero of Josef Kastein's romantic yet well documented biography, ran true to form. A learned Talmudist and Kabalist of Smyrna, at a time when Jewish persecution was rife throughout the western world, he came to conceive of himself as the destined savior of his race. Driven from home by the conservative hostility of the Rabbinate, he wandered from city to city, increasing his followers until his fame spread into northern Europe. A forged document lent assistance. After two unconsummated marriages, he wedded a beautiful harlot who had always cherished a dream that she was destined to marry the long awaited Jewish Messiah. Urged on by his disciples, he braved the Sultan by going to Constantinople, and the Sultan did not dare to have him seized. But at the fateful moment, Sabbatai Zevi hesitated. In order to strengthen his claims, he summoned to a conference an influential Kabalist from Poland, Nehemiah ha' Kohen. After a thrilling three days' interview, Nehemiah denounced Sabbatai as an impostor. Seeing that the Messiah's followers were bewildered, the Sultan took occasion to act, and Sabbatai, in fear of torture and death, recanted and accepted the Mohammedan faith. Thus his Messianic career came to an ignominious conclusion.

Josef Kastein's account of this interesting figure is somewhat overweighted with references to Jewish conditions elsewhere than Turkey in an attempt to make Sabbatai the central figure of seventeenth century Judaism. Despite this, he gives us a spirited narrative, critical but not unsympathetic, doing full justice to the dramatic and pathetic elements in the story.

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Round About Parnassus

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THE verse of Harold Vinal has greatly improved. His newest book, *Hymn to Chaos* (designed and printed by the Stephen Daye Press of Brattleboro, Vermont), contains poetry of delicacy and beauty. In fact, to be perfectly frank, it is good enough to make one wish it were better. It seems to me just to miss, in most cases, the precision of phrase and epithet that it attempts. In a number of the poems there is enough of delicate distinction to make one writhe when some careless or inappropriate word intrudes. As to binding and type, the book is in excellent taste, the page attractive, and the artistic aim of the verses high. When we come to such poems as "Vise," "The Stranger," and "Golden City," we recognize both power and imagination. Otherwise these designs traced upon the darkness of mortality fade to faint silver. In his ballads, which are interesting, though even the most successful of them, concerning the two brothers, is not quite brought off, Mr. Vinal affects the brief line but does not lend it the tenseness it needs. Again the sonnets of Part Two are not firmly enough knit. The poet's choice of forms demands brilliance of execution, and in this he falters. One would think that an ear often sensitive to the choice of words would eschew the sterile affectation of "apropos," "debonair," "residue," "morbid," and such, in their particular contexts, when he is capable of selecting the sophisticatedly right word in such a line as "Death, the astute ambassador." And when, in "Incognito," and in comparing a woman to a doe, he can see her as "a shaggy shadow," just after he has rather strikingly spoken of "the burnished hill of time" (vague but somehow rather good), one marvels at the inaccuracy of his imagination's eye. For by no possible stretch of the imagination could a doe be *shaggy*, even in the worst of winters. That is simply and distinctly *not* the epithet. I do not mean that Mr. Vinal's verse is packed with such misapplications. They are fairly rare. But they do often ruin some poem that might otherwise be notable. His main defect seems to me to be a lack of intensity of feeling, that intensity that wrestles with the most direct expression until it manages to emerge in the fewest possible words and the right ones. A good many of his poems are mere dalliance. He has, on the other hand, quite overcome an earlier tendency to silliness, and while he has not freed himself entirely of echoes, he seems on the road toward his own manner.

Louis How's *Nursery Rhymes of New York City* constitute a charmingly casual volume, greatly enhanced by the wood blocks in color of Ilse Bischoff, several of whose prints are in the Metropolitan, she having won four years ago the Boerick prize for wood engraving in Philadelphia at the Print Club. How is the author of several volumes of poems, a novel, several translations, and other books. The Harbor Press has printed the present volume, with additions, the original copyright being held by Alfred A. Knopf. Zoë Akins supplies an introductory note, in which she points out how from such evocative names as "Maiden Lane," "The Bowery," "Castle Garden," and so on the poet has wrought his rhymes. Mr. How's versification is adequate to his purpose. The songs are simple enough. They smack of the old time. They attempt no more than do the original nursery rhymes. Here is a sample:

Down with the swallow and up with the lark,
The ladies are waiting in Gramercy Park.
Gramercy Park,
Swallow and lark,
It never is noisy in Gramercy Park!

Up through the dawning and down through the dark,
The lovers are riding to Gramercy Park.
Gramercy Park,
Daylight and dark,
It always is evening in Gramercy Park.

HISTORY OF ITALIAN LITERATURE

by Francesco de Sanctis

"The appearance of the first English translation of one of the supreme literary histories of all time is almost as notable an event as the original publication. Certainly this is a profound and essential interpretation of the spiritual progress of a great people; certainly, too, it has been a positive creative force in the universal realm of aesthetics and criticism." —*Boston Transcript.* Introduction by Benedetto Croce. 2 vols., $7.50

HISTORY OF WORLD CIVILIZATION

by Hermann Schneider

An important and ambitious work, bringing the evolutionary history of man, from prehistoric times to the Middle Ages, as near scientific completion as possible. "This is a magnificent work by a writer whose imposing learning and profound insight does not stand in the way of a clear and gracious presentation. It is by far the best account I know of dealing with the foundations of our present civilization."—*James Harvey Robinson.* 2 vols., $10.00

MASKS, MIMES AND MIRACLES

by Allardyce Nicoll

"There are three kinds of people," wrote *Theatre Arts*, "who write about the theatre; antiquarians, modernists and Allardyce Nicoll, who makes the theatre of the past a living part of a living theatre." This is a connected survey of the popular, unliterary theatre from its beginnings before Aristophanes down to the commedia dell'arte in the 17th century. "Extremely entertaining and gorgeously illustrated book, which gives the reader the freedom of all the popular pantomime since the first nose was painted."—*Manchester Guardian.* With 226 illustrations, $15.00

HARCOURT, BRACE & COMPANY, 383 MADISON AVE., N. Y.

Vrest Orton of the Stephen Daye Press of Brattleboro, Vermont, has sent me Walter Hard's *Salt of Vermont*, comprising as many as seventy-eight character stories in "natural unrhymed form." The native material is of interest. The anecdotes and the account of what people said on certain occasions are mildly amusing. I have not found them much more than that. Mr. Hard and his daughter probably sell more books per capita now in Manchester than are sold in any other town in New England. They preside over a new venture, The Johnny Appleseed Bookshop. "Salt of Vermont" should appeal to the local populace. It is a sequel in a way to Mr. Hard's first book, *Some Vermonters*.

There are parables and saying of *The Wanderer*, by the late Kahlil Gibran, that are in prose but more properly come under the head of poetry. The book is to be published on January eighth by Alfred A. Knopf, and is, of course, illustrated by Gibran's own beautiful drawings. In fact, the whole book was completed shortly before Gibran's death on April 10th, 1931. The author was considered a genius by the millions of Arabic speaking peoples, but he had become known to the Occident as well as to the Near East. His poetry has been widely translated. A certain Blakeian resemblance is evident. Claude Bragdon has spoken of "some great reservoir of spiritual life" from whence came his power. The present volume's contents reminds me somewhat of the parables of the late Stephen Crane, though Crane's seem more trenchant. But to all admirers of Gibran the artist this book will be necessary. It cannot be said to add anything to his previous work, but it is in the same category and written with the same integrity of purpose.

In his essay on poetry, a lecture originally given at the Queen's Hall, London, which is now published by Macmillan as a small book, *Poetry*, John Masefield discusses four of the greatest poets, namely, Homer, Æschylus, Dante, and Shakespeare. He defines their places well, and finally sums them up as "the blind man (Homer), the gentle man (Shakespeare), the proud man (Dante), and the brave man (Æschylus)." Further he gives us these words which express his particular mystical vision of poetry, words that have a remarkable content:

> Brave, proud, gentle, and blind alike had access to an illumination which came within their beings, as sunlight comes within the sea.
>
> I believe that this illumination exists eternally, and that all may know it in some measure, by effort or through grace. Those who deny it can never have felt it. It is so intense that, compared with it, no other sensation seems to exist or to be real. It is so bright that all else seems to be shadow. It is so penetrating that in it the littlest thing, the grain of sand, the flower of the weed, or the plume upon a moth's wing, are evidences of the depth and beauty and unity of Life.
>
> This Life upon this Planet, and this Planet herself are parts or shadows or roots of something intenser and greater. We who are mortals are only partially incarnate, partially sentient, partially spiritual.
>
> But invisibly, very near us, touching us all, is a real world, of divine order and beauty, inhabited by spirits, whose mission it is to bring order and beauty, where they can, to mortal souls who are struggling for such things; and remote as this world is in so many ways, its messengers are constant and its centre is everywhere. The life of that world is all ecstasy of understanding, it is all that instant perception and lasting rapture which we know as poetry.

In reading the above I was surprised that such an utterance from a poet now widely known on both sides of the ocean had passed without apparent comment from the press of the world; for although it is a finding without scientific grounds, as we conceive them—it is a considered finding by an able practitioner of a great art which has always admittedly possessed an unfathomable element. I may say for myself that I share Masefield's belief, though I find the light he speaks of quite frequently in eclipse. It is certain, however, that many poets have shared it, and certainly it is something the greatest poets have taken for granted in their inmost beings. It is the best statement of the essence of faith that I have read for a long time. And it is, to me, an intensely rational matter. Poets are only those human beings whose perceptions are most constantly directed to the fact that what we call our world as it exists in space is an inconceivable miracle. There is no fact known to science that has power to shake this apprehension. Indeed, the more we know, the more deeply we move in miracle. Direct apprehension is quite obviously confused by all manner of superstitions which formal religions have fostered. But one either says "Mere Blind Chance" (which is to me inconceivable—and the more inconceivable of the two alternatives), or one accepts the mass of intuitive evidence that exists in poetry. This, as a poet, I naturally accept.

So this particular department ends with something like a sermon. But, whether or not my readers may agree or disagree, there is something here that will bear thinking of in the present seemingly rather disastrous state of the world's affairs. Our halting and thwarted gestures toward truth, equity, and beauty of conduct must only convince us the more of their possibility—that somehow and somewhere the perfection of such principles exists. Which does not mean that there are not innumerable practical things to be done here and now, to render less insane this comparative madhouse of a world!

Restoration Drama

OTWAY AND LEE. Biography from a Baroque Age. By R. G. HAM. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1931. $3.

Reviewed by WILLIAM CONNELY

MODERN biography, as it has been practised and accepted since the war, has in point of such elements as setting and characterization generally called for something of the skill of the novelist. This is not to say the biographer is entitled to imagine things as he likes. It is, however, to say that the present method of marshalling facts and presenting them inclines rather more to the dramatic, to intimacy, to clarity, and to orderly progression. Professor Ham, solid as his scholarship is in this study of Otway and Lee, has hardly justified the word "biography" in his subtitle.

A more accurate term, perhaps, would be "Dramaturgy." For in this book three pages in every four are freighted with excerpts from Otway's writings or Lee's, and mainly in verse. These quotations on the whole are apt, and they reveal the tricks of two men in writing plays, but they are far too numerous to allow smoothness for the chronological unfolding of a career; good paraphrasing of many of them would have resulted in a book more diverting.

Mr. Ham does sketch the trials of a boy's life at Winchester College in the seventeenth century, and he narrates more amply than has heretofore been done the episode of Otway's duel with Jack Churchill over an orange girl. This is biography. But we look in vain for a picture of army life in Flanders in 1679, an important chapter in Otway's adventures, and we do not altogether visualize Nat Lee languishing in Bedlam. Both Lee and Otway in the wretchedness of their lives were rather of a piece with writers like Savage or Chatterton. Mr. Ham does not project the character of either of his dramatists quite enough to bring this out. About a third of the way through the book he strikes his first event of lively interest: the love affair of Otway and Betty Barry. This opportunity the author lets vanish into a cloud of the dust of criticism.

Yet the strong points of this book are its first-rate criticism and its far reaches into the search for new facts and the testing of old ones. The discourse on the influence of politics upon Restoration drama is well done. The chapter on "Shakespeare and Otway" bears the imprint of the seasoned scholar. The digressions on concurrent history, if a little flat and formal, are illuminating and to the point, serving well to interlard the many synopses of plays. Some of Mr. Ham's original material, previously published by him in philological pamphlets, was appropriated and not acknowledged by the Rev. Montague Summers in his edition of Otway which appeared five years ago. Mr. Summers has been equally careless before, especially after combing the work of scholars not his own countrymen.

Leslie Hotson has followed up his "The Death of Christopher Marlowe" with other discoveries—nothing less than some entirely new facts about Shakespeare's life.

He has traced, through the labyrinths of Elizabethan records, the story of a quarrel between Shakespeare and a certain Justice Gardiner, and proves that when Shakespeare drew the absurd figure of Justice Shallow in "The Merry Wives of Windsor," he was holding up his adversary to ridicule.

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A Letter from London

By MRS. BELLOC LOWNDES

FROM a personal point of view, by far the most interesting literary piece of news I have heard for a long time concerns Arnold Bennett. He left, it seems, a detailed, intimate, and very frank diary, amounting to a million words. This diary was begun in 1896, and was carried on till he became too ill to write. It is proposed to publish at least three volumes of selections—the first dealing with his early life; the second covering the period of the war; the third written in the thirteen years which elapsed between 1919 and his premature death. The selections are to be made by Mr. Newman Flower, himself a man of letters, and an intimate of Bennett, as well as the head of the publishing house of Cassell.

My own friendship with Arnold Bennett began some years before he wrote "The Old Wives' Tale." During his life in Paris I heard from him often; and to my mind his letters, as is so often the case with an imaginative writer, had in them a quality of spontaneity and vividness sometimes lacking in his published work. Everything interested him always. He could make a "story" out of the most trivial incident or casual meeting, but human nature was naturally his chief preoccupation. During his thirty-five years of active working life, he met everyone of any note in every world — literary, political, and social—in England, France, and I think I may add, America.

Consider the extraordinary historical value of a gallery of such pen portraits by such a man—written not for publication, though probably Bennett was aware that everything by him would be printed some day. Like most people, he believed he was to live to old age, and, had that been so, much of what is now going to be given to the world might not have seen the light till the end of the present century. For my part, I shall be very sorry if the whole million words of this astounding human document do not find their way into print within a reasonable time.

A great deal that was unintentionally untrue was published about Bennett at the time of his death, or so, at least, it seemed to me. Had he never written a line—had he been, for instance, an ordinary man of business, instead of an extraordinary man of letters—the strength of his personality was such that he would have made an outstanding position for himself in any circle. In some ways he was exceedingly reserved. How many people, for instance, were ever told the true story of his enthusiastic friendship, and then his silent, complete break, with Frank Harris? Is that episode dealt with, I wonder, in the diary? And if it is, will it be published? Profound as was his knowledge (as a creator of character) of human nature, when face to face with real men and women Bennett was easily deceived. When proved wrong—to his own indignant, incredulous surprise—by subsequent events, he had the rare intellectual honesty to own himself mistaken.

With regard to his working life, Bennett had one most bitter disappointment, and one seldom far from his mind. This was his comparative failure as a dramatist. After a brilliant start with "What the Public Wants," and two outstanding successes — "Milestones" (in collaboration with Edward Knoblock) and that brilliant, delightful fantasy, "The Great Adventure"—he never again entranced any large section of playgoers. This was not only disappointing, it was also what irritated his type of brain to a remarkable degree, that is, a source of perplexity. I think the answer to the riddle was that Bennett, the novelist, could make the written word breathe life into his creatures. But when those creatures became live men and women, moving and talking on a stage, his lack of knowledge of real human nature, as often betrayed in his dealings with his fellows, made the characters in his plays appear, when not deliberately fantastic, lay figures. This was plainly the case in "Sacred and Profane Love," his own favorite among his dramas, which he continued to think of as exceptionally good after its complete failure as an acted play.

Modern publishers are not averse to quickly following a book on any given subject by another. After a lapse of fifty years since publication of the many-volumed life of the Prince Consort—"the noble father of our kings to be," as I think Tennyson called him—a one-volume life was published within the last few months, in which the author showed the husband of Queen Victoria in a somewhat different light from that presented in the huge official biography. And now Mr. Hector Bolitho, who has already written three or four intimate and well-documented lives of certain noted figures connected with the Victorian Court, is hard at work on a book which is to be called "Albert the Good." He will, I understand, be given access to a good deal of new material, and if this is true, new light may also be thrown on the enigmatical personality of Queen Victoria.

Prince Albert was probably as good as he has been, and is going to be, painted. But, if letters tell the truth, and it has long been my opinion that letters alone cannot lie—for diaries can be "cooked," and autobiographies are notoriously mendacious—then King Edward's father was singularly unlike the picture drawn of him by Mr. Lytton Strachey. I make this assertion because I was once lent a volume of privately printed letters written by Prince Albert to a cousin who was also his closest friend. These letters were full of what the world agrees to call "fun," and prove that the writer had a great deal of typically German humor. They revealed a very different young man from that portrayed by Sir Theodore Martin and projected, shadow-wise, in the most famous study of Queen Victoria.

An amusing and delightful innovation, at any rate as regards London, was the recent dinner, given at his private house, by Mr. Constant Huntington, who is head of Putnam & Sons in London, in honor of a distinguished man of letters. The man in question was Desmond MacCarthy, the first volume of whose collected critical essays was published on the day the dinner was given, under the title of "Portraits." Among those gathered to do him honor, and who drank his health—there being no speeches—were, among his host of friends and admirers. Maurice Baring, Margot Asquith, Roger Fry, Lord David Cecil, Herbert Asquith (novelist and reader to a well-known London publisher) and his wife, Lady Cynthia (who both as writer and editor has made a position in the London literary world), Edward Marsh, and those noted bibliophiles, Lord and Lady Esher.

I think it may be said with truth that Desmond MacCarthy is the only living critic who can be compared with three great critical writers of the past—Sainte-Beuve, John Morley, Edmund Gosse. As was the case with Sainte-Beuve, Desmond MacCarthy has been on terms of personal intimacy with a number of those of whom he has drawn such clear, delicate, and full presentments. George Moore, Henry James, Henry Asquith, Arthur Balfour, were all men he must have met at frequent intervals in the last twenty years. To my thinking, the best of these admirable essays is that with which the volume opens—the one dealing with Asquith (it is difficult to think of him as Lord Oxford). Many of the visitors to The Wharf have already written, or will in the future write, their impressions of that delightful country house, and of the delightful company which was gathered there on most Spring and Summer Sundays during Henry Asquith's lifetime. I think it is safe to say, even in these early days, that no such impressions will challenge as to taste, intimacy, and vivid realism, that in which Mr. Desmond MacCarthy reviews the Memoirs and Reflections of that British Prime Minister to whom fell the awful duty of bringing his country into the war.

To all those who lived in the literary and social worlds of pre-war England, as well as to a far larger circle beyond the seas, it is good news to hear that Elizabeth Robins (C. E. Raimond) is writing her reminiscences. At one time, as a quite young and brilliant American actress, she put aside everything to become the principal interpreter of Ibsen's characters on the British stage. She then suddenly turned novelist, under the name of C. E. Raimond, and of the half dozen books, each of high quality, written by her, "The Magnetic North" will surely survive among the great epics of endurance. To the best of my belief, this is the only book of the kind ever written by a woman.

Points of View

Melville's Marquesas

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

Since several biographers are at work on lives of Herman Melville, it may be well to make more widely known the following information relative to a few actual characters in Melville's "Typee" and "Omoo."

On September of 1846 a large vessel of war under the command of Lieut. Henry A. Wise, U. S. N., left Boston harbor setting sail for a voyage to Mexico, Chile, and Peru. Continuing onward, the ship made visits to some of the island groups of the Pacific, including the Marquesas and Sandwich Islands. The trip ending in the early part of 1849, Lieut. Wise published the journal of his travels under the title "Los Gringos, or an Inside View of Mexico and California, with Wanderings in Peru, Chile, and Polynesia" (Baker & Scribner, N. Y., 1849). The sketches embodied in the narrative were all written on the field of occurrence. On October 27, 1848, the ship dropped anchor in Nukeheva bay, and the lieutenant had "a peep at Polynesian life." He recorded the following:

"In all the lighter sketches upon Polynesia, I cannot resist paying the faint tribute of my own individual admiration to Mr. Melville. Apart from the innate beauty and charming tone of his narrative, the delineations of island life and scenery, from my own personal observation, are most correctly and faithfully drawn.

"At Nukeheva and Tahiti I made inquiry about his former associates, and without in the least designing to sully the enchanting romance of his fair Typee love, I may mention having seen a 'nut-brown' damsel, named Fayayway, from that valley, who apparently was maid of all work to a French commissary of the garrison. She was attired in a gaudy yellow *rôbe de chambre,* ironing the *crapeau's* trowsers. Credat Judens! There was also a diminutive young *oui oui* tumbling about the mats, so it is presumable she had become childish of late; yet the proof is not strong, for it is quite as much in vogue among the southern groups to change their names and give away infants, as the fashion in the Sandwich Islands of knocking out a couple of front teeth to evince grief at the decease of near friends or relatives, and the nymph alluded to may not be the original Fayaway after all.

Mr. Melville's friend, Dr. Johnstone, whom he has immortalized in "Omoo," was excessive wroth, and refused to be pacified, resolving shortly to prosecute the English publishers for libel. He politely permitted me to translate some items from his dose book, declaring, however, that the 'embrocation' so relished by the Long Ghost, was a villainous preparation, having the least taste of gin in the world, and made up from laudanum, turpentine, and soap liniment! Here is the memorandum:

Ship, Lucy Att, Captain Vinton,
October 15, 1842. Melvil, Herman.
Stocks.

Embrocation	.75
19th, do.	.75
	$1.50

"I felt no inclination to task it, since I found the Doctor's other prescriptions inexceptionable. The ghost must have been seriously indisposed; he had a large quantity; was supposed at the period of our visit to be in Sydney, or after gold in California, but, with his ubiquitous propensities, may have been in both places. Captain Bob, of the Calaboosa, was "muckee-moi," so was Father Murphy, all under the sod. Charming Mrs. Bell had taken to hard drink, *before* Mr. Melville's rencontre, and may have been slightly elevated on that occasion. H. M., ci-devant Consul, Mr. Wilson, was in the like vinous state, and occupied his leisure in the pursuit of shells at the Navigator Islands. Shorty was still devoting his talents to the culture of potatoes at Aimes, and strongly suspected of shooting his neighbor's cattle.

"I have no evidence that Melville ever read Wise's volume; but it would be interesting if we had his comment on the status of Fayaway, and the alleged condition of Mrs. Bell, who, to Melville, had 'such eyes, such moss-roses in her cheeks.'"

A description of Queen Pomaree is given on page 383 of this volume.

JOHN H. BIRSS.

Mrs. Woolf as Novelist

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

Will you give me space enough in your paper to enable me to shout long and loud in celebration of Robert Herrick's article on Mrs. Woolf in this week's issue of your paper? I am second to none in my admiration of Mrs. Woolf as a stylist, but whoever said or can prove that she is a novelist? And is it possible that there is any sane man who cannot see the utter futility of the kind of writing that Mrs. Woolf is doing? To say, as Earl Daniels says in this same issue of your paper, that "'The Waves' is a novel of first importance" is to confess the bankruptcy of criticism.

Professor Herrick's article is especially valuable in revealing Mrs. Woolf's complete separation from everything that constitutes reality in the present world. Her writing, beautiful as it is, has no more ultimate significance than the reams of writing produced by certain types of patients in our lunatic asylums. Great literature, if I mistake not, springs from life, and life has never had any remotest contact with Mrs. Woolf. Her books are the mere rationalization of vacuity.

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

Notice to Booksellers!

After January 22 there will be only one book on Russia that will satisfy *every* customer—one book that will answer *every* question about what is happening in the U.S.S.R. today and why. Its author is Professor of Political Science at the University of Heidelberg and was for years professionally in touch with the economic situation in Russia. His book deals with Russian economics, history, politics, art, science, philosophy, literature and the communal life of today. It contains 760 pages, 127 illustrations and 13 maps. It will sell for $7.50. It is—

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SOME RECENT BIOGRAPHY

The Isham Boswell

THE BOSWELL PAPERS OF THE ISHAM COLLECTION. Vols. 10, 11, 12. Edited by FREDERICK A. POTTLE. Privately printed by William Edwin Rudge. 1931.

Reviewed by ARNOLD WHITRIDGE
Columbia University

ONCE again, Colonel Isham, Professor Pottle, and William Edwin Rudge have pooled their talents for the benefit of the small reading public that can afford this glorious edition of Boswell's Papers. Colonel Isham's rescue of the Boswell manuscripts from the vaults of Malahide Castle is now an old story. He was fortunate to get the late Geoffrey Scott to decipher the manuscript, and he has been no less fortunate in his choice of Professor Pottle to carry on the work that Geoffrey Scott left unfinished No rare Greek papyrus has ever received more scrupulous devotion than Professor Pottle has given to Boswell's journals. Whether Boswell warrants such extreme cultivation may be questioned. Poor Mrs. Boswell would turn in her grave if she knew that the shameless journal had become public property, but there is no question that the author himself would be enchanted with the beautiful publicity he has finally achieved.

The Isham Papers have already showed us in startling relief Boswell the indefatigable lover, the lion hunter, the buffoon, and the literary artist. In every guise there had been a disarming sincerity about the man that no one had been able to resist. Zélide, the Dutch bluestocking, Paoli the Corsican patriot, John Wilkes the demogogue, and Burke the philosopher, all bore witness to the charm of his society. Johnson described him in "The Journey to the Western Islands" as a "companion whose gaiety of conversation and civility of manners are sufficient to counteract the inconveniences of travel," and on another occasion he speaks of him more succinctly but no less accurately as "a man everybody likes."

The three recent volumes covering the period 1774-1777 reveal a far less endearing personality. For the first time we hear of his "coarse, ill-bred and abusive style of conversation." His "valuable" wife is continually being humiliated by his bouts of sordid debauchery. He begins to lose that wonderful appetite for life that has captivated posterity as it did his own contemporaries. From time to time he becomes afflicted with "a kind of faintness of mind, a total indifference as to all objects of whatever kind, united with a melancholy dejection." Boswell had always been subject to fits of hypochondria, but by the year 1775 the fits of drunkenness and hypochondria succeed each other with wearisome regularity.

In one of his vivid portraits in miniature Lytton Strachey states that it "would be difficult to find a more shattering refutation of the lessons of cheap morality than the life of James Boswell," but if Mr. Strachey will take the trouble to read Boswell's own journal he will find on the contrary that no one ever paid more dearly for his backslidings. At the age of thirty-five Boswell began to realize that he was a failure. He made his vows of sobriety as often as ever but he knew now that he could never keep them. His friend Sir John Pringle, probably the wisest friend he ever had with the exception of Johnson, once told him that he knew nothing. Boswell admitted that Sir John was right.

> There is an imperfection, a superficialness, in all my notions. I understand nothing clearly, nothing to the bottom. I pick up fragments, but never have in my memory a mass of any size. I wonder really if it be possible for me to acquire any one part of knowledge fully. I am a Lawyer. I have no system of Law. I write verses. I know nothing of the art of Poetry. In short I could go through every thing in the same way.

The uncanny detachment with which Boswell records in his journal every humiliation he experienced need not blind us to the change in spirit that had come over him since he thrust his way into Rousseau's sanctum and thumped him on the shoulder.

DR. JOHNSON (FROM A WOODCUT BY BERTRAND ZADIG)

Of course there were still moments of gaiety in Boswell's life, as when he drove through the village of Wellwyn on the road to London singing "The Roast Beef of Old England," and making "a prodigious jovial noise." The society of Johnson always had an invigorating effect upon him, because Johnson refused to listen to his continual plaints of self-pity. In another way the bustle of London acted as a tonic, but Boswell was a busy Edinburgh lawyer and he only managed to get to London occasionally. The myth that he spent his life at Johnson's elbow taking down every chance remark from the lips of the great man has already been exploded. During the three years covered by these volumes he spent only three months in Johnson's company. Those three months have already been accounted for in the "Life." The Journal adds little, for instance, to what we know already about the trip to Lichfield and Ashbourne in 1776. We learn that he kissed the maid in Johnson's house in Lichfield, and that he got more than usually drunk while staying with Paoli in London, but except for a few such details the "Life" is a more vivid record than the journal. Boswell was too good an artist not to select the best passages for his biography.

The original material is contained in the daily record of his life in Edinburgh. Boswell tells us how he very nearly had to fight a duel with one William Miller whose father was the justice who had ruled against him in the John Reid case. Apparently, in an effort to save his client, he had written to the papers casting doubts upon Miller's impartiality, upon which Miller's son had challenged him to a duel. The agony that Boswell and Mrs. Boswell went through before the young man was finally pacified throws a new light on Boswell's character. He was a timid man by nature, and yet he was continually being challenged to fight duels. Sometimes he did the challenging himself. He never actually met an opponent on the field of honor—either he or his opponents always apologized—but on seven separate occasions he had to weigh the conflicting claims of honor and discretion. His son, Alexander Boswell, inherited his propensity for libelling the men he disagreed with, but unlike his father Alexander Boswell lacked the courage to admit his mistakes. He perished in a duel at the hands of a man whom he had erroneously called "a fat coward."

In addition to the Journals these volumes contain the account of two interviews, one with David Hume on his deathbed, and the other with Margaret Rudd, the celebrated forger, which are among the best things Boswell ever wrote. His longing to see how an atheist would meet death is very characteristic of the man. In spite of his weakness religion played a very real part in his life. No matter how often he was unfaithful to his wife he was perfectly sincere in asking Johnson for " a short clear system of religion" with which to face the future. He craved assurance about the life hereafter because to a man of his temperament annihilation was too awful to contemplate, and yet he would not have missed the sight of David Hume dying quite placidly "in the persuasion of being annihilated." This titillation of the emotions, spiritual as well as carnal, was exactly what he enjoyed more than anything in the world.

The visit to the notorious Margaret Rudd was no less exciting in its way than the visit to David Hume. When Boswell first met Mrs. Rudd she had just succeeded in cheating the gallows. Her lover had been hanged for forgery and she herself had only escaped by playing on the sympathies of the jury. Boswell's cautious tête-à-tête with the wickedest woman in London shows what a helpless innocent he was in spite of his debauchery. He congratulated himself upon his escape from Mrs. Rudd without even letting her know his name, but his escape was only temporary. In a later volume of the journal we shall see how at her own time the talented Mrs. Rudd added the laird of Auchinleck to her list of distinguished victims.

The Iron Master

INCREDIBLE CARNEGIE. The Life of Andrew Carnegie, 7835-1919. New York: The Vanguard Press. 1931. $3.50.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

HAVING written an excellent life of William Randolph Hearst and an uneven, highly journalistic sketch of the career of the older J. P. Morgan, Mr. Winkler turns to Andrew Carnegie, "the greediest little gentleman ever created." Tis book is lively, interesting, impressionistic, superficial, and none too accurate. The greatest single merit of the work lies in its incisive and sometimes really penetrating assessment of Carnegie's character. Its greatest defects are its snap judgments, its oversimplification of complex business phenomena, its excessive emphasis on the picturesque and melodramatic, and its colloquialism of style. It is a journalistic forerunner of the really thorough and careful biography by Mr. Burton Hendrick which we may shortly expect.

Mr. Winkler's attitude toward Carnegie, like that which he took toward Morgan, is frankly cynical and hostile. He pictures the Scotchman as "resourceful, ruthless, ravenous"; as possessed by a "money mania and lust for power"; as "motivated by unqualified unselfishness"; and as ready to float a banner inscribed, "Success at any Price!" The effort to paint a piratical and unscrupulous Carnegie is not highly successful. There are no chapters in the life of the great steelmaker half so dark as a number of those in Rockefeller's career, or half so shabby as the early chapters of J. P. Morgan's business history. To him, as to everybody else of his generation, business competition had many elements of warfare, and he played the game without giving or expecting much quarter. But he had too strong a Scotch sense of ethics to crush the weak in Rockefeller's ruthless way, and he carried even into his fights a saving geniality. Mr. Winkler's portrayal of character is best when he deals with Carnegie's vanity, which was colossal and unfailing—the only really "incredible" trait about him—and his bubbling enthusiasm and imagination. Like some other business men (Gustavus Swift, for example, or James J. Hill), he was a dreamer and in some respects a poet. He had curious qualities of temperament and personality, also, some of which Mr. Winkler aptly catches. He was humorous, witty, fond of anecdote, laughter, and company; he was eagerly interested in the surface of many things — politics, religion, literature; he was childlike, erratic, and in his whimsical way sometimes lovable. If Mr. Winkler had not exaggerated his "ruthless" and "ravenous" side, these qualities would appear in fairer proportion.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received.

Belles Lettres

1900 A. D. By PAUL MORAND. Payson. 1931. $2.50.

Few of us know the world events in the years surrounding our birth. M. Morand, familiar to many as the intensely French cosmopolite, traveller, writer, man of the world, does "not agree that the nineteenth century came to an end in 1914." He contends here that 1900 was the real turning point. In his peppery, yet suave style, with civilized and witty comment, he introduces and then analyzes the society of that day—"so near and yet so distant" to us now. His book, with its discussions of the prejudices and tendencies of the epoch, resolves itself into a series of essays which give the reader the stimulus of conversation at a dinner table where the food and wine are good, the women beautiful, and one's dinner partner accomplished in the gentle art of reminiscence. In retrospect the glamor wears away and the brilliance fades somewhat leaving simply an impression of seduction and charm.

M. Morand, interpreting freely events and their results, proclaims the year 1900 "a spoilt child proud of its advanced ideas." He designates it as a political and militaristic age, reflecting its politics alike in the theatre, literature, and art. Undoubtedly the chapter to be most appreciated is that of the Great Exhibition, or "Illusion" of 1900. With the French Colonial Exposition still fresh in our minds it is both ironic and amusing to realize that the same criticisms are afloat now as then. As "a carboard cosmopolis" we perceive the triumph of electrical effects a second time. Horrific taste, however, was more associated with the 1900 "Illusion," and admirably does M. Morand focus his searchlight on the atrocities of the Rococco and late Victorian in architecture, art, etc. In piquant vignettes he gives us the whole scene; the celebrated actresses of Sem's Sketchbook — Sadda Yakko — then Young Lyautey—a prominent figure at both Exhibitions. Not closely enough knit, his volume, nevertheless, is a witty reporter's notebook which sets out to entertain and does more often than not.

TIMES AND TENDENCIES. By AGNES REPPLIER. Houghton Mifflin. 1931. $2.

Miss Repplier is always deft, entertaining, and distinguished. Any volume of her essays may be bought with a certainty of undiminished values. The shade of difference between this and most of her earlier volumes is in the subjects. It is due perhaps to the changes, noticeable of late, in the demands of the magazines that were formerly called literary. The typical magazine essay now is a sort of extended editorial. Its topic is current. It is all about today and tomorrow, about here and now.

Miss Repplier's topics are various aspects, oddities, problems of American life. She is not an enthusiast for them all. It is unfashionable at present to be such for any of them. The first essay in the volume, "Town and Suburb," argues that neither the big city nor its suburbs are as satisfactory places for civilized living as the old small city used to be.

Fiction

SEMI-PRECIOUS STONES. Translated by VALENTINE SNOW from the Russian of A. I. Voinova. Cape & Smith. 1931. $3.

Voinova's story would appear, to be, among other things, an illustration of the artifices to which present-day Russian writers are driven in order to follow their natural channels of thought and the customary practices of novelists.

The principal character and the narrator of the story is a technical expert of bourgeois antecedents, a sort of devil, who takes a sadistic delight in torturing nearly everybody with whom he comes in contact, while at the same time using them to advance his personal career and fortify his position with his Communist superiors. By thus making him the villain, as well as a man given to more or less subtle elaborations of psychological analysis, the author is able safely to attain two ends. Through Okromeshkov's cold-blooded dissection of the motives and achievements of his associates, he can indulge in a considerable amount of satirical criticism of revolutionary types and accomplishment, and also dissect psychology to his heart's content, without himself being accused of "bourgeois soft-mindedness." Okromeshkov must take all the blame, which is explicitly tacked on to him in the final chapter, when the Government's prosecuting attorney, in freeing him from a charge of murder, warns the public that men of his type are the most dangerous phenomenon in present-day Soviet life. They represent "abnormal twists of the old, self-centered type of mind. Personal emotions, separation from the collective, self-analysis, reflection—all this is the same to us as an illness of the organism, known under the name of spontaneous gangrene."

Before presenting this "alibi," the author spins a somewhat long-drawn-out but not uninteresting yarn, of love, intrigue, and Soviet office politics, which is now in the realistic-satirical, now in a sort of fantastic manner, with a sinister enigma of a melodramatic lover, who sends his lost love black roses and knows everything other people do without seeming to spy on them.

The first style will probably be the more interesting to Americans, for here we get an entertaining and more or less informing, inside picture of how parts of the Soviet bureaucracy work—how vast plans are made and tremendous sums invested, not so much, perhaps, because they are logically called for, as a means by which technical experts justify their existence or climbers in positions of authority feed their sense of personal power. In his other manner, the author is a bit claptrap, and the diabolic selfishness with which his villain plots the discomfiture of all and sundry partake a bit too much of the "one-track mind" and gets rather tiresome after a time.

"Semi-precious stones" is the commodity in which Okromeshkov's office is specially interested at the time of the story. There is also a figurative analogy drawn between the purposeless glinting of the semi-precious stones and self-centered individualism of such characters as Okromeshkov.

THE FRENCH ADVENTURER. The Life and Exploits of La Salle. By MAURICE CONSTANTIN-WEYER. Macaulay. 1931. $2.50.

Do not fall into the error of supposing that Constantin-Weyer has produced a scientific appraisal of La Salle's character or has written a historical evaluation of his exploits. By his own confession the author had no such design. He planned to tell a story of adventure and to tell it briefly. He completely achieves his purpose. From the day when you meet Cavelier leaning over the rail of the sailing ship in the fogs of the North Atlantic to that other day eighteen years later when you look upon the lifeless body which three demented men are stripping of its clothes, you are carried along through a tale which is full of action and excitement. So swift is the tempo of the narrative that you never have a moment to study La Salle in person. The adventurous Frenchman constantly eludes you. Perhaps Constantin-Weyer desired to have it so. But when you have finished the book you begin to wish that La Salle had stood still for a moment. You would have liked to know what manner of man he was.

When you tell a story to a little child you must make the parts of your story hang together. The glass slipper must fit Cinderella's little foot perfectly, and it must be quite a logical thing that Cinderella should be quite the most beautiful girl at the ball. If you prove unable to make the various parts of your story fit accurately into one another, or if you fail at all on matters of simple logic, you are undone so far as your critical audience is concerned. The child will say that you do not know how to tell the story. Well, Constantin-Weyer, a winner of the Goncourt prize, knows how to tell the story.

In view of the confession in the preface it would be nothing short of pedantry to attempt to criticize this tale as an alleged biography of one of the greatest explorers of the American continent. Did you think that Constantin-Weyer was writing this story for learned historians of myopic biographers? Please don't be absurd.

THE GREEK. By TIFFANY THAYER. Boni. 1931. $2.50.

Who would ever suppose that the author of "Thirteen Men" suffered from a pronounced Napoleonic complex? Yet here it is, in his new novel, "The Greek," blurted abroad with characteristic energy —and those who don't like it can do the other thing!

The author himself, under his pen-name of Tiffany Thayer, is the hero of the story; but as the story is merely a sort of motor truck for the carrying and displaying of the author's opinions, prejudices, and ambitions, that is understandable, even if a trifle unconventional. The Greek prince, Paros, who plays the title role, and who acts as the author's hobby horse, is reminiscent of one of Ouida's guardsmen—a wonderful creature, as handsome as Jack Barrymore used to be, and as fatal to women as the late Rudolf Valentino; and an amazing military genius into the bargain, when coached by Tiffany Thayer.

Paros is the descendant of the ancient royal line of Greece, and is being groomed by a wealthy and wide-spread Greek secret society to seize the throne as soon as the time is ripe. Thayer, owing to his wife's charms, meets the prince and becomes involved in the movement, finally becoming its agent in America and helping to raise a vast force of Greek restaurant-keepers, bootblacks, florists, etc., for use on this side of the Atlantic.

How Paros made his coup and became King of Greece; how he annexed Albania and Bulgaria; how Washington, D. C., was surrounded and isolated, and how the U. S. Navy was bottled up in various harbors, and how Mr. Hoover (this is February 1932!), when refused permission to ask Coolidge's advice in the emergency, surrendered the federal government to the invaders, and how Paros was immediately proclaimed H. I. M.—the Emperor of America—all this may be read in the entertaining pages of "The Greek." Yes, and more also; for in gratitude for his assistance Paros gave Thayer a free hand to make and suppress laws, regulations, constitutions, and all that sort of thing; and the result naturally was that these United States suffered a sea-change into something rich and rare and blossomed into Mr. Thayer's idea of what a community ought to be.

In fact, "The Greek" may be considered a handbook of "What Is Wrong with America?" Life was very different under the beneficent rule of Tiffany Thayer, Attorney General to his Imperial Majesty Paros I. Most of our grievous errors of life and government were rectified. Slavery came back; so did harems. Prostitution was resuscitated as a worthy career for ambitious girls; churches of all denominations were in hard luck, and, of course, prohibition early went into the discard with the *Sat-Eve-Post* and other institutions of the land. Every man was entitled to commit not more than three murders per annum—murders of hoofers or tap-dancers not being counted; and altogether a merry, even a lavish, time was had by all (except the Puritan).

However, it is not fair to follow out the story to the end and so make it unnecessary for anyone to read the book in order to see how it finishes. The book should be read, as a matter of fact, for though it is impudent and sometimes unduly coarse, it is amusing and clever and often hits the nail on the head. In other words, it is no mere extravaganza, as its plot might indicate, and much of it is written with real intention. If the author could give up the idea that he is a second Voltaire and at the same time keep away from trying to imitate James Joyce, he would certainly have a better book. We offer this suggestion, gratis, for his next novel.

Juvenile

GRANDMOTHER TIPPYTOE. Written and Illustrated by LOIS LENSKI. Stokes. 1931. $2.

One could easily put a name to the delightful and distinctive illustrations in this little book; no one else but Lois Lenski is doing just this kind of thing for children. It is an added pleasure to see her name also as author, for one knows in advance that her imagination will have been given full play. The extended flat plane in which she draws (our language is appreciative merely, not technical) is filled with endless quaint and interesting details and offers an enchanting field of ex-

(Continued on page 433)

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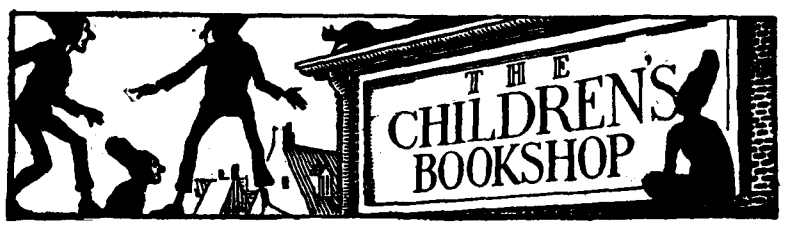

Conducted by KATHERINE ULRICH

Up and Coming Girls

JOAN JORDAN'S JOB. By MARGARET WARDE. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1931. $2.

DAYS OF GOLD. By ANNE SPENCE WARNER. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1931. $2.

LUCK OF LOWRY. By JOSEPHINE DASKAM BACON. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1931. $2.

THE GAY MYSTERY. By ETHEL COOK ELLIOT. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1931. $2.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF CYNTHIA. By ERICK BERRY. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1931. $2.

THE GRAPER GIRLS. By ELIZABETH CORBETT. New York: The Century Co. 1931. $2.

Reviewed by MARION C. DODD

HERE is a sheaf of girl's books, none outstanding yet none without merit. Any might be offered with recommendations to girls of fourteen or fifteen or to an occasional sixteen-year-old whose tastes are fairly unsophisticated. The quality of the writing is for the most part rather unusually high, in the sense of being appropriately natural and alive. The illustrating, however, averages lower than one hopes for.

Is it perhaps a sign of the times that two of these books concern themselves with a young girl's need and determination to earn money, to help out a family situation? "Joan Jordan's Job" is the most worth while from a practical as well as an imaginative point of view, and will be read with interest by girls who are trying to find odd jobs that pay. Several which this young worker discovers are better material as story than as real suggestions to be taken up, for they are too accidental, too much the product of the author's invention to be easily reproduced in life. Others, however, are suggestive for anyone with ability and determination. All the incidents—according to which the book naturally falls into sections—are told with vitality and good understanding of character.

The other tale of a money-earner, "Days of Gold," is very different in scene, and supposedly to most readers into whose hands it is likely to fall is of interest rather as story than as suggestion. An Agricultural College course is the objective, and ranching, mining and (on a small scale) sheep-raising are the setting—interesting enough to carry us through the tale of lost gold in a buried mine which forms the additional and much more conventional part of the story. The book is of uneven value, an odd mixture of interest and conventionality, and the writing sometimes corresponds in sudden unnecessary lapses into banality. The gold, whose location is to be traced only from an ancient journal and the talk of a half-witted old inhabitant, is found, of course, by the heroine's persistence, and the family is more than put upon its feet; especially as the unexpected little brown arrival among the new karakul lambs proves to have its own fantastic commercial value.

Let us have done with lost treasure! Yet alas, while always old are they not always new in interest for some unsophisticated reader! So—here is another, "Luck of Lowry!" It is a ruby necklace this time, which appears at the end of a well-written book. Old and complicated family affairs leading to its concealment behind a deep stone of a well must be traced through cryptic messages themselves hidden in odd spots, and the search is shared by a strange mixture of unaccredited characters who are hot on the trail. The boy and girl relationships and friendships and the difficult adjustment of Barbara to new environments which she must enter seem a more valuable part of this book than its treasure-seeking plot.

To pass from treasure to mystery seems appropriate, but "The Gay Mystery" has the advantage of being of an unusual variety—not a lost treasure here nor a crime, but a study of apparent double personality based on the resemblance of twins and the determination of two sisters to help each other to an education. By a remarkable (and, alas, scarcely plausible) scheme of interchanging roles, they perplex teachers, principal and friends; but their apparent gross delinquencies are dissipated when the brother of the supposed young authoress of the book tracks down the truth by an ingenious series of detective's observations which will make this book of interest to boys as well as girls. This, added to some good characterizations (including that of the fifteen-year-old scribe), carries the book along; in passing one wonders why the real solution was suggested near the beginning and then abandoned. Nothing seems to be gained thereby.

Of our two remaining books, the "Illustrations of Cynthia" is a series of vivacious pictures of art-school life—methods, work, stunts, friendships—written as a succession of sketches rather than a story with any definite plot; hardly a serious study yet interesting to those unfamiliar with these young art student days. And "The Graper Girls" is a picture of family life, not elaborate but written with understanding and humor around two parents and three grown or growing daughters. In the description of their good times and their various stages of growing pains novelty is lent by the author's giving successive sections to each sister in turn to tell in the first person. Penetration and humor are not checked but given free rein. The device is not new but is well used here.

Mayan Imps

THE SPINDLE IMP. By ALIDA SIM MALKUS, with drawings by ERICK BERRY. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1931. $2.

Reviewed by HARRIET HAMMOND
Peabody Museum, Harvard University

MAYA myth and folklore are brought home to the children in Mrs. Malkus's volume of short stories. These tales are an inviting introduction to the daily life and belief of the ancient Mayas.

Ishbel, a small Maya girl, whisked from home at nightfall by the Little-Clay-People, meets a small boy, Tuel Ulil. Surrounded by the Little-Clay-People, the two children float to the top of the great stone temple, and there enjoy the enviable privilege of sliding down the bannisters of the Serpent Stairway. Through the night they wander in the jungle, encountering terrifying figures of legend and superstition. No sooner do they escape from Giant Grab than the formidable figure of Old-Man-of-the-Woods, the man of rubber, appears to molest them. At last, after hairbreadth escapes, they reached the thatched cabin of Ishbel's father and are content to remain quietly, for a time at least, within the family circle, performing household tasks and listening to the grandfather's stories of witches and sprites.

Further adventures in the jungle take Ishbel and Tuel Ulil to the underground city of the hares and through the jungle on the back of the Monarch of the Deer. Finally falling into the hands of a hostile tribe, they are brought before a powerful chieftain through whom they gain honor, wealth, and everlasting happiness for themselves and their families.

Mrs. Malkus, in an effort to create an atmosphere of primitive superstition, has populated the world of the Maya children with a distracting host of imps and demons of ancient lore. No doubt they believed every pot and stone, tree and well to possess an indwelling spirit of its own, but frequent reference to these creatures, while anthropologically interesting, tends to divert the attention of the reader from the main thread of the story. Unfamiliar figures appear for a moment with their Maya names, or the English equivalent, only to subside at once into oblivion, leaving behind them a mild confusion with no very definite impression of any sort. Further, Maya names dropped casually here and there, with or without their English meanings, are discouraging to the average reader, whether adult or child.

The most successful stories are "The City of the Hares," "The Monarch of the Deer," and "The Phantom Bird," in which the discursive style and struggle for Maya atmosphere give way to absorbing adventure freely and simply told.

Erick Berry has recognized the decorative value of figures from the Maya Codices, and borrows them for use as chapter headings. Her full page pen and ink drawings are charming.

A Darling Nanny

THE OLD NURSE'S STOCKING-BASKET. By ELEANOR FARJEON. Illustrated by E. H. WHYDALE. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co. 1931. $1.75.

Eleanor Farjeon has achieved one of her most delightful creations in the old nurse;—so inherently a nurse that she symbolizes the nurse figure of all ages, and recounts as stories to her present very human family of charges her experiences of many distant periods. For always there are children and always there are nurses, in times present and in times long gone by, whether in Greece, India, Lapland, China, or Spain, or in a fantastic realm where things happen hardly according to every-day practice. Nanny has experienced them all, and when the children are in bed at night she selects a story to tell which will fit in length with the hole in the stocking she has pulled from her basket to darn—and then they are off. Only one hole was Nanny ever daunted by, and that is part of the story of Neptune's lost baby and how he recovered her by a threat of making a hole that Nanny would not be able to darn. The challenge was taken up—but Nanny lost, for the hole proved to be a whirlpool which old Neptune made with his knee, and no yarn or needle could deal with that.

Perhaps, however, an even more charming story is the one of the little Prince of India and the violent temper which he thought he preferred to having a heart. After misbehavior, one of Nanny's charges had reached a stage of tearful remorse. Nanny got a big sponge, and washed his face, saying, "I haven't washed off so many tear-stains since I washed the Prince of India's face by the Lotus Lake."

"When, Nanny?" asked Roley; while Ronny asked, "Did the Prince of India have *many* more tears than me?"

"Yes, he did, and needed them too! Let me see when it was. It was before I was nurse to the Inca of Peru, but after I was nurse to the Sphynx of Egypt—or else it was the other way round. A body can't remember. Anyhow it was a very long time ago.

"The Prince of India began by being the very worst boy I ever nursed in my life. He cried about everything, and got into the most fearful tempers; and even his gentle mother, the Ranee, could do nothing with him. . . . One day he asked his mother, "why do I cry so much?"

"I don't know," she said. "Perhaps it is your heart that makes you cry, when you have been in a temper."

"Then I won't have a heart!" said the Prince of India.

"Oh," begged his mother, "don't say that. It would be better not to have a temper than not to have a heart."

"No, it wouldn't," said the little Prince haughtily, "I *like* my temper and I don't like my heart."

So he sent for his Magician and told him to take away his heart. And then as Nanny went on to tell the children in one of his most frightful tempers the poor Ranee was turned into a White Elephant; but of course even so it was she who later on saved her boy's life and heart.

Extracts are never very satisfactory, but this one seems to suggest much of the spirit of a book that has charm and humor in plenty and is delightfully written and illustrated.

About the Farm

SPOTTY, The Story of a Holstein Cow. SUNSHINE ROSE, The Story of a Shetland Pony. OLD ABE, The Story of a Lincoln Sheep. BILLY BERK, The Story of a Berkshire Pig. By JOHN Y. BEATTY. Chicago: Thomas F. Rockwell Co. 1931. Each 50 cents.

Reviewed by LULA V. STOTT

MOST people who write animal *stories for children seem* to feel that the way to interest their public is to turn animals into imitation human beings like the famous Peter Rabbit. But Mr. Beaty has far too much real respect and affection for his farm friends to do anything of this kind, and I very strongly suspect that in this he shows as true an understanding of children as he undoubtedly has of animals.

Have you ever stood interminably before a pig pen with a little child wondering what it is that holds him so spellbound? Have you watched his interest grow as he becomes more and more familiar with those particular animals and that particular farm? Have you seen him reproduce in his play every detail he has absorbed in his visits, just for the pure joy it gives him to live over in imagination the thrill of the original contacts; and have you seen him perhaps complete the circle by going back to the farm for more details to put into his play scheme, just to add to the joy he finds in his own creative powers? If so, it is hard to escape the conclusion that any amusement he may feel over the incongruous adventures of the Peter Rabbit type of creature is but froth on the surface compared to this vital and developing interest in the real animal. When Mr. Beaty tells us how he himself learned the pig language, he seems to come very close to this natural approach of a child.

> Some days I would go into their pens and lie down with them on their beds of clean bright straw. And if I lay real still they would come up to me and poke their cold little noses under my head and say "Ugh." That means: "Roll over and let me lie down in the bed your head has made."

This is the kind of internal evidence that gives more authority to his writing than the mere fact of his having been a professor of agriculture in the University of Wisconsin. Quite obviously his pig and pony and cow and ram are all real animals that he knew and loved and that is why they hold for children with farm experience of their own, that strange charm which recognition of the familiar never fails to arouse. Even the rich informational details will probably be chiefly valued for the increased sense of reality they give to those readers who have already discovered many of them for themselves. The same animals and the same few people appear too in all farm stories so that the sense of intimacy is pleasantly enhanced as one reads on.

I found myself wondering what age of child they would best fit. The stories are so simple that they would be doubtless within the grasp of five or six year olds and yet the wealth of detailed information makes me suspect that an older child might be even more interested in them.

The Progressive Education Association is now affiliated with the New Education Fellowship, an international movement whose aims and ideals are similar to those of the former Association, with representatives in twenty-eight countries, and bureaus in London, Dresden, Geneva, and Paris. The New Education Fellowship is to hold a Conference in Nice, July 29-August 12, 1932, on Education in a Changing Society. An American committee, representing *Progressive Education*, the New Education Fellowship, and other organizations interested in international education have organized a temporary international bureau, to coöperate in plans for the Nice Conference.

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*. As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries received cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

M. *C. P., Nice, France, needs a history of the world for a child, one more advanced than Hillyer's "Child History of the World"* with which he is familiar. The logical next step is taken by Gertrude Hartmann's "The World We Live in and How It Came to Be" (Macmillan), a history of the world in terms of invention, discovery, and building. This has a great many excellent pictures from contemporary sources, so many that the captions almost tell the story, and there is a steady sense of continuity. For a child older than this I would plunge into Wells's "Outline of History," preferably the edition with all the pictures.

W. H. B., New York, asks what essays, poems, and other references on sleep this department can give him. Bartlett's "Familiar Quotations" can give him any number; so can Hoyt's "New Cyclopedia of Practical Quotations" (Funk & Wagnalls), or "The Home Book of Verse"; there is a section of sleep-inducing poems in R. H. Schauffler's "The Poetry Cure" (Dodd, Mead) of which an illustrated version, "The Junior Poetry Cure," has just appeared. There is a most interesting book on "Hypnotic Poetry," by Edward W. Snyder, published not long since by the University of Pennsylvania Press; it examines the sources of the spell that certain poetry weaves about the hearer, and at the close breaks into protest against such critical prejudices as work against "spell-weaving" verse, with an appeal for sounder methods. It is precisely the book for this inquirer. This is as far as my space will stretch; suggestions from readers will be forwarded. *M. A. B., Chicago, is looking for some other source than Tennyson's play "Becket" for the phrase "this pestilent priest," supposed to have been used by Henry the Second in regard to Thomas à Becket.* Numerous histories and cyclopedias have been consulted as well as Giles's "Life and Letters of Thomas à Becket," J. R. Green's "Henry the Second," Montague's "Notable Archbishops of Canterbury," and Salzmann's "Henry the Second." Readers are requested to come to the rescue. *D. H. A., Morgantown, N. C.*, says " 'The Diary of a Provincial Lady," by E. M. Delafield, ought to fit in any list for intelligent readers who can appreciate sly humor, but this is one book which a woman will understand more readily than her husband will. It's priceless—but how can a family be as hard up as this seems to be and yet have three servants and a boy away at school?" This inquirer adds: "Isn't there a new novel out by Mrs. Belloc-Lowndes? I would never have heard of 'Letty Lynton' if it had not been for The Phœnician." Indeed there is, and a grand good one, too, "Vanderlyn's Adventure" (Cape & Smith), a right romantic thriller. I remember Mrs. Belloc-Lowndes's murder stories, though in general such a one goes through my mind without a trace; the people in "Letty Lynton," for instance, have a creepy way of coming back to mind at the very sight of the book's cover. *More novels about nurses keep coming in: N. V. P., Stanford University, California,* suggests Sinclair Lewis's "Arrowsmith," of which I should surely have thought, Warwick Deeping's "Roper's Row," and Viña Delmar's "Bad Girl."

A gratifying number of correspondents have reported the book in which Greek roots for English words were shown. It is "The Greek Element in English Words," by John C. Smock, edited by Percy W. Long, published this year by Macmillan and costing fifteen dollars. "It is," says S. N. D. of Smith College's Greek Department, "not primarily the work of a professor of Greek but of a scientist, and some thousands of words were contributed by one of my colleagues who is a busy teacher of zoölogy." Several others sent information, one a prospectus with sample pages showing how clearly and handily the arrangement has been made. The work lists approximately 130,000 English words with their Greek sources. S. N. D. adds:

> To the list of books of travel in Dalmatia and Greece which you gave a few weeks ago I should add "Greek Lands and Letters" by F. G. and A. C. E. Allinson (Houghton Mifflin). It is a pleasant and untechnical account of places of Greece, with reference to their poetic and historic associations. Maurice Hewlett's entertaining diary of a journey in Greece was published in the London *Mercury* (1924) and was reprinted in his "Letters." At the risk of seeming too didactic, I suggest that books of travel in Greece are perhaps better read after one's journey than before; and that the best preparation one can make is to read Homer, Greek tragedy, and Herodotus, and to acquire some knowledge of Greek architecture and sculpture; also (if this is not enough) of Byzantine art.

H. *C. B., New York, is gathering a library of world classics in translation, and asks if there has been a more satisfactory version of "Faust" of recent years than the familiar one by Bayard Taylor.* Alice Raphael's translation of "Faust" (Cape-Smith), published this year, goes to the death of Marguerite; it is as near to the literary idiom of our time as Taylor's was to his, and one gets from it a sense of reading freely, without a translation's undue hampering. It has thrilling woodcuts by Lynd Ward. I do not read Italian at all, and my acquaintance with Dante has been mainly through the prose version, but I have confidence in Professor Grandgent, who says of the new translation of "The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri," by Jefferson Butler Fletcher, Professor of Comparative Literature at Columbia (Macmillan), that it is the best he has seen, combining "thorough understanding, fidelity, resourcefulness and poetic feeling." For my own part I can speak for the grace with which the difficult rhyme-scheme is carried out, and for the flow of the lines. The illustrations are from drawings by Botticelli made in 1492-5 to illustrate a copy of the "Divine Comedy" for Lorenzo de' Medici; there are fourteen full-page photographs of these, of unusual interest. The other noteworthy translation from the Italian is Joseph Auslander's "The Sonnets of Petrarch" (Longmans, Green). This is my first acquaintance with Petrarch in any form, and I am grateful enough that it was made through a version so noble. One goes on from page to page, held as by a spell. Arthur Livingstone says of it that "one is closer to Petrarch in his renderings than in the efforts, however worthy, of his predecessors." I am glad to learn that these are "actually Petrarchian lines": I know that they are beautiful lines.

The New Books

Juvenile

(*Continued from page* 431)

ploration for a child's eye, which finds familiar objects of interest both indoors and out, decked forth in pleasant guise.

The story is one of those simple sketches that younger children delight in, and, if one has a leaning to parrots, one's satisfaction herein will be complete. Grandmother Tippytoe, whose portrait endears her to any reader at once, and Solomon the parrot, her partner in housekeeping, carry on a long campaign of companionship and good-natured teasing. Solomon, singing his jingles, wins easily in the teasing, but Grandmother seems always to know that his heart is safely in the right place, even during the grand hunt for the Lost Gold Needle, which occupies so much of the book and furnishes its climax. The whole thing is charming with that deceptive simplicity which requires so much art for its satisfying effect.

Miscellaneous

CAT'S COMPANY. By MICHAEL JOSEPH. Illustrated by B. F. DOLBIN. Dodd, Mead. 1931.

Mr. Joseph begins his book with his own cats among whom Minna Mowbray is the ranking favorite; extends its chapters to various famous cats and their owners; then wanders into the bypaths of stories about cats belonging to "a certain lady of my acquaintance in Dorset," or perhaps living at "West Clandon, a village near Guildford"; adds a debate on the comparative merits of cats and dogs; slides into a wholehearted justification of cats in all their aspects, and ends with a sensible chapter on cat hygiene. The book is written *con amore*, and has the appeal of any such work. Many a reader will like also the inadvertant glimpses of England and English life. The magic is largely supplied by Herr Dolbin's sketches, so rough, intense, and far removed from all prettiness. And we for one were glad to enjoy the excellent format, to meet Mrs. Mordaunt's Boy, the sea-going cat of a captain, and to learn that perfect phrase, "a marmalade cat."

MARRIAGE AT THE CROSSROADS. By WILHELM STEKEL. New York: Godwin. 1931.

This volume is a popular exposition of the views on marriage of Dr. Stekel, an Austrian psychoanalyst, whose experience proceeds by way of Krafft-Ebing to Freud.

Marriage, he concludes, is primarily an individual rather than a social problem. Monogamy is the ideal, and a happy marriage is derived from a background of satisfactory family life. The conditions of a happy marriage include correspondence of erotic love requirements, harmony of temperaments, equal life rhythms, suitable mixture of masculine and feminine elements in both partners, equality of the sexes in marriage, complete candor. Such proposals as trial or companionate marriage are utopian; all marriages are in fact trial marriages.

Dr. Stekel resorts freely to epigrams, which are put in italics, and to a startling use of statistics. The fate of the marriage is decided on the bridal night. True lovers need no teacher and no text book. Frigidity and impotence are the most common afflictions of modern humanity. Possibly fifty per cent of all marriages are doomed to failure if one considers only the sexual side of the problem. The Academy of Moral and Political Science, in Paris, has determined that out of 96,834 marriages exactly seventeen can be described as happy. Love marriages were once a glorious exception; now they are almost the rule. All marriages in which the first no was not heeded, become unhappy. Only happy parents have the right to propagate themselves.

A HISTORY OF SURNAMES OF THE BRITISH ISLES. By C. L'ESTRANGE EWEN. The Macmillan Co. 1931.

This book is apparently a labor of love and leisure and is a refreshing change from the usual somewhat superficial book on the subject of surnames. Mr. Ewen has undertaken his task with a clearly defined plan and has not spared the labor of acquiring exact information by wide reading and research. His book provides an excellent introduction to the methodology of the study of surnames. It contains also an instructive chapter on the legal status of surnames. An ample index facilitates reference to the many names discussed in the book.

PROVINCE AND COURT RECORDS OF MAINE. Vol. II. York County Court Records. Edited by CHARLES THORNTON LIBBY. Portland: Maine Historical Society. 1931.

This volume of Maine records, kept when the region was part of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, is of more than legal interest. The records themselves are source material for the customs and moral attitudes of the period, as well as a mine of geneological reference; and scholars will find in the Preface a dissertation upon the spelling of the period as indicative of contemporary pronunciation which is a definite contribution to a field of study just now assuming great interest. Indeed this Preface in its entirety is a storehouse of valuable comment upon the period, and Mr. Libby's pungent style does not detract from the value of his material. It is interesting to note in the court records (which run from 1653 to 1679) that it cost on the average 5 shillings to be absent for several Sundays from church, 15 shillings to swear "god dame mee I will bee revenged of you," and £20 to leave a wife.

SINS OF AMERICA, "As Exposed by the Police Gazette." By *Edward Van Every* with an Introduction by *Thomas Beer*. Stokes. 1931. $5.

Another treasure of social custom taken from the old *Police Gazette*, many of the pictures printed on the familiar pink paper, and as a commentary on the social, moral, and esthetic change worth many a dull volume. Accompanying introduction and text describing the background of the pictures add very much to the interest of the pictures.

THE BOOK OF THE FOX. By *Richard Clapham*. New York: Derrydale Press.

EVERYMAN'S ENCYCLOPÆDIA. Dutton. Vols. V, VI.

THE ROMANCE OF TRANSPORT. By *Ellison Hawks*. Crowell. $3.

THE WAY OUT OF DEPRESSION. By *Herman F. Arendtz*. Houghton Mifflin. $1.

PHOBIA. By *John Vassos*. Covici-Friede. $5.

THE CARE AND FEEDING OF ADULTS. By *Logan Clendening*. Knopf.

SCHOOL VENTILATION, TEACHERS COLLEGE. Columbia University. $1.

UP SHIP! By Lieut.-Commander *Charles E. Rosendahl*. Dodd, Mead. $3.

PHILOSPHIES OF BEAUTY. By *E. F. Carritt*. Oxford University Press. $4.25.

READINGS IN INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY. By *Bruce J. Moore* and *George W. Hartmann*. Appleton. $5.

PORTRAITS IN POTTERY. By *Albert Lee*. Stratford. $6.

MANUSCRIPT WRITING LESSONS. By *Stone* and *Smalley*. Scribners. 28 cents.

VILLAGE AND OPEN COUNTRY NEIGHBORHOODS. By *Walter A. Terpenning*. Century. $4.

READINGS FROM NEGRO AUTHORS. Edited by *Otella Cromwell, Lorenzo Dow, Turner*, and *Eva B. Dykes*. Harcourt, Brace.

SLAVES TODAY! By *George Schuyler*. Brewer, Warren & Putnam. $2.50.

EVERYBODY'S BOOK OF NUMBERS. By *Loma Fantin*. Brewer, Warren & Putnam. $1.50

THE SOCIOLOGY OF CITY LIFE. By *Niles Carpenter*. Longmans, Green. $3.90.

LE ROMAN DE TRISTAN ET ISEUT. Edited by *Foster Erwin Guyer*. Century. $1.10.

FAVORITE PAGES FROM CHILD LIFE. Compiled by *Marjorie Barrows* and *Frances Cavanah*. Rand McNally.

ONE HOUR OF MEDICAL HISTORY. Compiled by *Benjamin Spector*. Beacon Press.

"UP." By *"Jack" Stearns Gray*. Strasburg, Va.: Shenandoah Publishing House.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN. By *Ellen Churchill Semple*. Holt.

PROHIBITION. By *K. Gunther*. Neale. $2.

THE PERIODICALS OF AMERICAN TRANSCENDENTALISM. By *Clarence L. F. Gohdes*. Duke University Press. $3.50.

EDUCATION OF THE AIR. Edited by *Josephine H. MacLotchy*. Ohio State University. $3.

A THOUSAND IDEAS FOR MOTHERS. By *Helen Jackson Miller*. Century. $2.

THE DEVIL IN LEGEND AND LITERATURE. By *Maximilian Rudwin*. Open Court. $3.

THE BOOKMAN'S GLOSSARY. By *John A. Holden*. Bowker. $2.50.

Pamphlets

PASTEBOARD MASKS. By *Vega Curl*. Harvard University Press.

THE RESPECTABILITY OF MR. BERNARD SHAW. By *Ayers Brinser*. Harvard University Press.

Religion

SINCE MRS. EDDY. By ALTMAN K. SWIHART. Holt. 1931. $3.

The title of this generally excellent book is a little misleading. The work is not, as might be supposed, an account of the Christian Science movement during the last twenty years, but is merely a record, carefully documented and scrupulously objective, of the most dramatic episodes of that movement, episodes connected with the careers of two remarkable women, Augusta E. Stetson and Annie C. Bill. These, the only outstanding personalities in Christian Science during recent years, both heretics, one by necessity, the other by choice, furnish, however, ample material for an interesting and significant volume. The first half is devoted to the life of Mrs. Stetson, tracing her close relationship with Mrs. Eddy, her amazing success in New York City based on her ability to "demonstrate money," her excommunication in 1909 on the charge of "mental malpractice," her violent chauvinism during the war with her amusing attempt to displace the Star Spangled Banner by a national anthem of her own composition, her assertions of her own immortality on earth and of the imminence of Mrs. Eddy's resurrection until these claims were silenced by death in 1928. It is all an astonishing record of the degree to which fantaticism and superstition could still flourish in the most cynical and wordly-wise of American cities during the first quarter of the twentieth century.

The second half of Mr. Swihart's book is taken up with what started out as an attempted reform within the Church and developed into a rebellion against it. Mrs. Annie Bill, daughter of an English clergyman, was converted to Christian Science in 1904, but after Mrs. Eddy's death she felt that the Directors of the Mother Church were guilty of a great usurpation of power. Relying upon certain vague prophecies of Mrs. Eddy that she would be followed by another woman leader and upon the obvious superiority of women to men for such a task, she put herself forward as the true head of the Church in 1914 and called upon the Directors to turn over to her organization all their property, including the various Christian Science publications. When this demand was unheeded, she began to publish in

(*Continued on next page*)

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Fifteen years ago Doubleday, Page and Company published a book by LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH entitled *Trivia*. In the opinion of this correspondent it is a modern classic of the aphoristic art. For a Christmas greeting to its friends and a New Year salute to its fellow-craftsmen of the word business, *The Inner Sanctum* can think of nothing better than a reverent and joyous reprinting of the two paragraphs on page 146, headed *Consolation:*

"The other day, depressed on the Underground, I tried to cheer myself by thinking over the joys of our human lot. But there wasn't one of them for which I seemed to care a hang—not Wine, nor Friendship, nor Eating, nor Making Love, nor The Consciousness of Virtue. Was it worth while then going up in a lift into a world that had nothing less trite to offer?

"Then I thought of reading—the nice and subtle happiness of reading. This was enough, this joy not dulled by Age, this polite and unpunished vice, this selfish, serene, life-long intoxication."

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The PHŒNIX NEST

WE have been following with some interest the argument between *Mr. Malcolm Cowley* and *Mr. Gorham B. Munson* which was apparently started by an article of Mr. Cowley's in *The New Republic*, was replied to by Mr. Munson, and is now resurrected again in an article of Mr. Munson's in *The Sewanee Review* entitled "The Fledgeling Years," though the article is actually a review of all that was doing when Mr. Munson and Mr. Cowley and *Mr. Josephson* and *Mr. Kenneth Burke*, and others of their time, were young and rebellious. 1916-1924 are the dates Mr. Munson gives. It is always interesting to read of the fresh endeavors of youth to make over the world of art and letters. These men who are still young enough, as we compare them with our own senility, have, most of them, now accomplished something in literature, and earlier they went through a series of interesting phases. They are still young enough to enjoy writing about themselves. Of course it was inevitable that there should be certain clashes, a certain amount of internecine warfare. As is usually the case in the fledgeling years, such arguments have a way of seeming comparatively unimportant in retrospect, a fact of which both Mr. Cowley and Mr. Munson seem to be aware, though they still politely give each other the lie concerning details. . . .

What really matters is that the *résumés* both of Mr. Cowley and of Mr. Munson preserve a fragmentary and controversial record of the newer generation's ferment of a decade. We ourself should like to read more about it. The period we knew most about, which also featured its own clashing personalities, was that just prior to the one under consideration, rich also with much anecdotal material, and with certain strifes that were most exhilarating in that time. What impresses us most, however, in meditations is that while group movements are necessary to youth, the movement just as necessarily fades away as the individuals begin properly to emerge. For if men are truly to find their footing and do their own work, after initial casting-about and experimentation, it would seem to us that they cannot give much time to general programs and manifestos. Of course, one cannot lay down a general rule for individuals. The writing of some thrives best in an atmosphere of controversy. But that is only, we believe, in the formative years. There is, of course, for some writers the continuing problem of getting their work published; and new and unstereotyped periodicals are useful for this—although it seems to us that today publication in book form is no longer so difficult to achieve as it has been in years gone by. There are many contemporary firms who welcome work out of the beaten track. . . .

Probably, however, we are just getting old. It is indubitable that some writers do their most enduring work during the youthful period in the midst of all sorts of alarums and excursions. Once they settle down into a reputation, some of them never bring off such things as they were capable of when the world was young and their apprehensions voracious. But to return to the specific—now that both Mr. Cowley and Mr. Munson have made essays at recording their own generation, it would seem already to be moving into the background. We wonder what their successors—their successors must already be marshalling!—are contemplating. How swiftly the ranks fill up from behind! What new phalanx is already in process of forming, drawn from South, East, and West? But can it yet be time for another aggregation? It will be interesting to watch and see. . . .

Dale Warren has sent us several notes concerning *Maude Meagher*, whose novel "Fantastic Traveller" we recently praised in these columns. We have also received her "White Jade." She is a friend, it appears, of the famous translator of Chinese poetry, *Florence Ayscough*. Miss Meagher was born in Boston. Her father was an itinerant preacher, and she travelled about America with him. She attended the University of California and then escaped to Europe, where she toured Germany with a company of American actors. Leaving the stage ten years ago, she settled down in a flat in Chancery Lane, began to read Herodotus, studied the ancient moon cults, tried her hand at journalism, spent a winter in Capri, and gave free play to fertile imagination. Aside from writing a weekly column on international politics for the San Francisco *Chronicle*, she lives almost completely to herself and maintains that London is the safest and most satisfactory hiding-place she has ever discovered. . . .

Percy Crosby, the famous creator of "Skippy," having now got out a new dollar edition of "A Cartoonist's Philosophy," is offering one hundred dollars for the best essay not exceeding three hundred words on "What I Like or Dislike about Skippy's Philosophy," to be found in that book. The judges will be *Ward Greene*, novelist and executive editor of the King Features Syndicate; *Gilbert Seldes*, playwright, essayist, and critic; *William Lengel*, managing editor of the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, and *Hugh Leamy*, managing editor of the *American Magazine*. Entries are to be mailed to Contest Editor, Percy Crosby, Publisher, McLean, Virginia, and must be in by midnight, February 15th, 1932. . . .

We extend our grateful thanks to *Katherine Heberton* of Denver, Colorado, for her most pleasant letter concerning this department. . . .

Once more, and this finally, we request high school instructors to place their hands on their favorite textbook and, as an added New Year's resolution, to pledge themselves NOT to advise their students to write lazy (and usually illiterate) letters of their "chosen" authors requesting (as *Louis Untermeyer* puts it) "the stories of their lives, holograph copies of their longest poems, copies of unpublished manuscripts, and other such trifles." "God knows," he adds, "we writers still have an ideal or two up our sleeves, but if this is the New Education!" A quotation from a recent letter he received runs as follows:

> I would like for you to send one of those mentioned (brief sketch of his life or photograph) or send a poem that you have written that has not been published. If you have the poem that you first wrote, I would like to have a copy of it.

Teachers who inspire their charges to perpetrate requests of this kind constitute a real menace to authors. And they obviously haven't the slightest conception of authors as human beings with a desire for decent privacy, a sense of humor, and a shrinking from bestowing gifts upon infants they have never even heard of before. The infant is not to blame. He or she is probably in most cases just as bored at having to write the letter as the author at receiving it. But the teacher should certainly know better. There is no manner of excuse for this passion for wasting an author's time. . . .

We grieved someone out in San Francisco by declaring that we were what they called "a Mooneyite." "Let me beg of you to keep out of a bad business lest you be misjudged," writes our correspondent. We dare say we've frequently been misjudged, but that doesn't seem to make much difference to us. We reassert that Mooney's imprisonment is one of the gravest miscarriages of justice in the history of the United States — and that doesn't take much independence to do, as practically all truly informed people are of the same opinion. . . .

The Advisory Board of *Contemporary Arts*, consisting of *Horace Gregory*, author of "Chelsea Rooming House," *James Burnham*, editor of *Symposium*, *Lincoln Kirstein*, editor of *Hound and Horn*, *Pierre Loving*, American editor of *This Quarter*, *Chard Powers Smith*, author of "The Quest of Pan," and *Gerald Sykes*, announces to us that at 12 East 10th Street, each "Last Thursday of Each Month," there will be a presentation of the works of new authors and of new ideas from recognized writers at eight-thirty P. M., admission one simoleon. The advisory board passes on works submitted by various publishers and selects the book they see fit to treat, choosing its author to speak upon it.

THE PHŒNICIAN.

The New Books

Religion

(*Continued from preceding page*)

England a *Christian Science Sentinel* and a *Christian Science Journal* until forced to desist by legal difficulties. Her church was at first named "The Central Assembly of the Individual and Universal Church of Christian Science," but after several changes eventually became "The Church of the Universal Design." Since 1924 its headquarters have been in America. Mrs. Bill's various works on religion and metaphysics, as analyzed by Mr. Swihart, reveal a much broader and abler thinker than either Mrs. Eddy or Mrs. Stetson, but this very breadth and tolerance have worked against the development of any strong organization behind her movement, which seems destined to remain only a very interesting heresy.

INTO WHAT PORT? By AGNES ROTHERY. Coward-McCann. 1931. $2.

Miss Rothery, writer of travel books, has produced a curious scramble of puerile symbolism, disjointed anecdotes, travelers' tales, travel description, and slight character sketches. All this is cast in what is ostensibly intended to be the novel form, and represent a precious attempt to create objectivity by viewing life on shipboard through the eyes of a cat! But Madame Cumæan is no ordinary cat: she "judged each individual simply by that aura which he creates about him, whether he will or not, out of his innermost desires." Even this attempt at objectification is not unflaggingly maintained, for the cat, with her "psychic divination" "christens" people, "appraises" them, and analyzes their characteristics, potentialities, and "innermost desires." She "possessed an instrument . . . by which she could receive those psychic waves surging, surging from every human soul." It is a pretty thesis for an ailurophile, but in this instance contributes nothing to the construction or authenticity of a novel.

Brief Mention

"PHOBIA" by John Vassos (Covici, Friede. 1931. $5) is a series of brief descriptions of all phobias with which human nature is troubled with very impressive, not to say disturbing, full-page imaginative pictures in the author's characteristic style. It is a book that no one can lay down once opened or want to go to bed too soon after reading. The Harvard University Press is publishing in a good format Burns Martin's "Allan Ramsay: A Study of His Life and Works" ($2) with notes, appendices, and bibliography. The Grolier Society, Kansas City, has just brought out in two volumes "Folklore of Romantic Arkansas," by Fred W. Allsop. The books are rich in anecdote, folk tales, pioneer narrative, and in general a mass of material useful for sociologists, novelists, and historians. Although not scientifically ordered these books are a storehouse of material. "The Making of Rumania; A Study of an International Problem, 1856-1866," by T. W. Riker (Oxford University Press. 1931. $7) is a detailed study of the formation of an important modern state. In the "Contemporary American Architects" series (Whittlesey House. 1931. $3 each or $8 for the set) three very attractive volumes containing pictures and plans are devoted to the work respectively of Raymond M. Hood, Ralph Adams Cram, and Ely Jacques Kahn. This seems to us a particularly useful enterprise for the time of anonymity in important modern architecture should now be passed. "The Fables of Æsop," with fifty drawings by Alexander Calder, one of the *Éditions de luxe* of Harrison of Paris is published here by Minton, Balch & Co. at $4. The text is the famous text of Sir Roger L'Estrange, and the somewhat unnecessarily phallic drawings in outline, are at least amusing. Another illustrated edition of interest is the "Boccaccio" with pictures by Steele Savage. The translation is John Payne's, and the very striking illustrations give distinction to the familiar text. This is a Blue Ribbon book and is sold like all the series at $1. Christopher Morley's popular "A Book of Days: "A Journal for Every Day in the Year" (John Day Co.) has been rearranged as far as its calendar is concerned for 1932 and reissued, presumably with a new text for February 29th. Duke University Press has issued an interesting account of Norfolk, Virginia, from its earliest days ($3.50). Those who enjoy the text as much as the pictures of the *New Yorker* will be glad to see "The *New Yorker* Scrapbook" (Doubleday, Doran. 1931. $250.)

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Picasso's Etchings

OVIDE: LES METAMORPHOSES. Eaux-fortes Originales de Picasso. Lausanne: A. Skira. 1931. $400, $700, $1,200.

THIS is an *édition-de-luxe* of Ovid, translated into the French by Professor Georges Lafaye of the University of Paris, being the text of the Association Guillaume Budé. But however important the French text may be, what really makes the book distinguished, and serves for pricing at such extravagant sums, is the inclusion of thirty of Picasso's etchings. On these etchings the book will stand or fall, since the printing, good as it is, could not possibly warrant any such prices.

As to the importance and merit of Picasso's work as represented by these thirty plates, opinions will differ—must indeed be hopelessly divided between those who esteem his work and those who do not. The etchings are in severe and simple line, and this line is usually free and flowing in a way which only a competent master could manage. There is something clear and classic in the handling, an economy of means which challenges equally severe criticism. In the case of the heads the result is definite, reasonably free from distortion, and often noble: the drawings of animals, however, are not so sure nor so satisfactory: while in the case of legs and arms and hands and feet the result is grotesque and unlovely and ineffective. The gross distortion of the human body, a distortion which obtrudes and challenges attention, is not good art. It is, in fact, as bad art as is photographic attention to exactness. It has been said that Flaxman's drawings of classic subjects are nurtured on 'alf-and-'alf: Picasso is classic with a touch of absinthe.

But the etchings are, as presented here, only a part of the book. And, despite the dicta of French printers and their American disciples, one cannot successfully disregard the balance between pictures and text in printing a book. Only in a portfolio of pictures can the illustrations usurp the stage. With pictures and text there must be harmony of line and color. It is unfortunate that in the book before me this has not been successfully done. The book has been conceived in the grand manner, but when one works in the grand manner one must have all the parts perfectly conceived and perfectly coördinated.

In format the book is a good size quarto, well printed on hand made paper by Léon Pichon of Paris. But there is a failure to make the typography live up to the etchings— and the etchings were naturally the first consideration. To fit such pictures and to make them an integral part of the book (since, printed as they are on the same pages as the type, they cannot be disengaged from the volume) some such type as the cold and classic forms of Bodoni or Didot was almost imperatively demanded, an "elegant" and sophisticated letter. Instead of such type, the mellow, homely Anglo-Saxon Caslon face was chosen. One fails to find any harmony between type and pictures, and instead of serving to emphasize the pictures the type page turns its back on the illustration and each pursues its own way. I admit that this is good French practice —but bad book making.

Such fantastic prices as are placed on the volume invite comment. There are ninety-five copies on Arches paper at $400, thirty copies on Imperial Japanese vellum at $700 and $1,200, the latter containing each an original drawing of Picasso's, and twenty copies for the collaborators all unbound. It may be said that a price of thirteen dollars each for thirty of Picasso's etchings is not excessive: but a price of $400 for any new book, unseasoned by supply and demand, is excessive. It is an exaggerated price not warranted by the costs of manufacture nor the standing of the artist. It is also an unfortunate confusion of the purpose of a book and the nature of an etching. A printed book is not an *objet d'art*, while an etching may be. R.

Franklin the Scientist

THE INGENIOUS DR. FRANKLIN. Selected Scientific Letters. Edited by NATHAN G. GOODMAN. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 1931.

AS a further contribution to Franklin material, the University which he founded has issued this small quarto, printed after the style of his time, embodying letters on scientific subjects written by the learned and ingenious doctor. The editor has assembled over fifty letters, touching on all variety of subjects, and evidencing, if that were necessary, Franklin's originality of mind. The volume contains, besides well known letters, others not hitherto published. R.

Engravings of Beasts

THE LIFE STORY OF BEASTS. By ERIC FITCH DAGLISH. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1931.

MR. DAGLISH, who will be remembered for his book of birds, has done the animals in wood, and has written pleasantly about their habits and habitats. The engravings are of uneven merit—some of them—as the Tapir—are excellent examples of the engraver's art, while others are not so good. R.

Marginalia

MARGINALIA TO LIFE, Being Notes from the Private Papers of ANTHONY HILLYER. Los Angeles: T. P. Stricker. 1931. $2.50.

THIS book has been set up in Cochin type, and printed, by the publisher, as his effort to coördinate the various functions of printing usually practiced by several hands. The volume is a small quarto of some forty pages, containing the somewhat common-place observations of the author, and attractively designed. The paper is printed the wrong way of the grain—a defect which need not be. R.

Venus and Adonis

SHAKESPEARE'S "VENUS AND ADONIS." Illustrated by ROCKWELL KENT. Rochester, N. Y.: Leo Hart. 1931.

THIS new printing of Shakespeare's poem has been set in Lutetia type and printed on American rag paper. The typography is by Will Ranson. What distinguishes it are the pictures by Rockwell Kent. They are printed in two colors—and the colors register to a hair—a none too common virtue in such work.

I must confess to a constant delight in Kent's work. It is varied in technique—I have seen nothing of his quite like these pictures—they suggest in a way comparison with Eric Gill. They are delicate and lovely, and—which is probably the reason why one hears weariness of Kent's work expressed by smaller minds—they are finished, thorough examples of craftsmanship. In a day of slovenly, hurried work for effect, of arrogant disregard for meticulous drawing, they are, of course, somewhat out of key; but if three men with a new song's measure can trample a kingdom down, perhaps a few men of Kent's ability may yet rescue and rejuvenate American illustration. At any rate this edition of "Venus and Adonis" is justified by the pictures.

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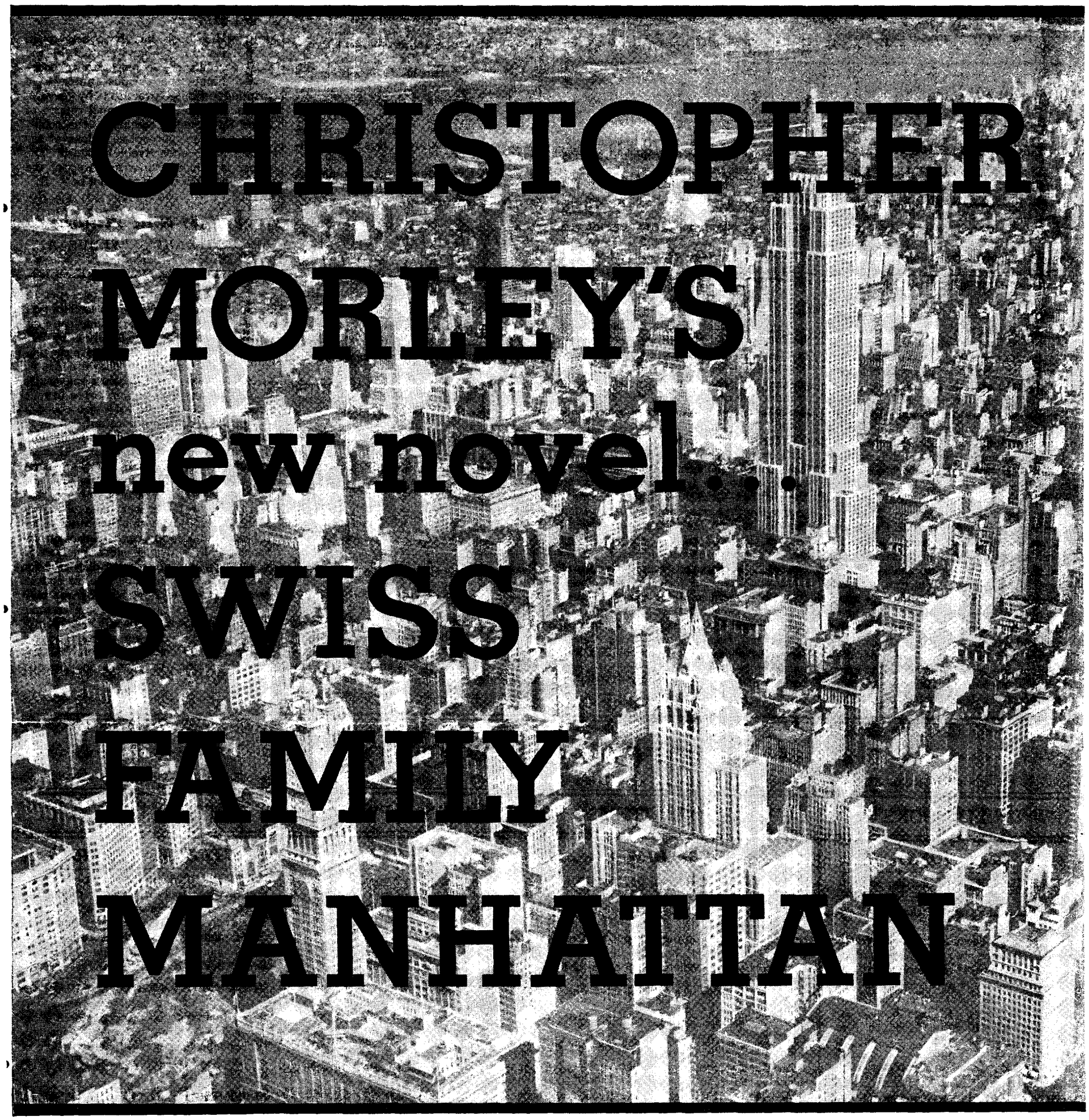

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